

## Jindal Touts Job Creation As Priority

By: Mike Brossette, *The Tri Parish Times* with additional reporting by Jane Arnette



SCIA Board of Directors join Governor Jindal and Representative Dove at the head table for the July GM Meeting at The Cypress Columns.

Three hundred people gathered at The Cypress Columns for a special July SCIA membership meeting to hear Governor Bobby Jindal speak on area jobs.

Gov. Bobby Jindal said the state's focus will be on producing new jobs during his talk last week to the South Central Industrial Association in Gray. The governor is conducting a tour of all 64 parishes in Louisiana.

The push for job creation comes after Jindal created initiatives to reform ethics, business taxation and workforce development in the state last year.

"We're in the worst recession since the Great Depression," he said. "How do we respond in Louisiana? In Washington, they raise taxes. We can't print our own money in Louisiana."

Jindal singled out three construction projects in Houma partly funded with state money that he said would create around 1,800 new jobs in the area: the building of Edison Chouest's LaShip shipyard at the Port of Terrebonne, producing 1,000 jobs; the expansion of Gulf Island Fabrication in Houma and the creation of a new company subsidiary, 456 jobs; and the expansion of Performance Energy Services at the Port of Terrebonne, 350 jobs.

"LaShip is one of the transformative drivers of our economy," he said. The project has received \$14 million in state investment. Performance Energy is seeking \$3.3 million from the state through the Terrebonne Economic Development Authority.

In addition, Southern Business & Development magazine recently recognized Terrebonne Parish for bringing in businesses that have a positive local impact. Jindal said two area residents, Brent Billiot of Lockport and Derek Bascle of Bourg, benefited from businesses receiving state support. After suffering an accident, Billiot, who works on engines, lost his former job but was hired by Diesel Tech of Louisiana in Houma. Diesel Tech received a \$1.5 million loan guarantee from the state last year to expand operations.

Bascle wanted a career change following eight years as a claims adjuster and was the first person hired by LASHip.

The governor said 32,000 jobs have been created during his administration statewide and listed numerous businesses around Louisiana that have added employees. He said the state's image is improving.

continued on page 13

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT...



I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who attended our July general membership meeting at the Cypress Columns. SCIA made a strong and impressive showing for Governor Jindal. We are strength in numbers and have truly become the "Active Voice for Regional Industry". I want to again thank the SCIA staff for their outstanding job coordinating and executing this important meeting.

I again want to take the time to recognize Senator Reggie Dupre for his service to our region and state. Words alone cannot describe Senator Dupre's dedication, commitment and tireless efforts working for his community, our region and the state. He has left some large shoes to be filled.

Through the generous support of the Gordon "Bubba" Dove, Jr. Foundation the SCIA awarded the second \$5,000 scholarship in the namesake of the late Gordon "Bubba" Dove, Jr.

All of our committees continue to work hard serving and bringing information to our membership. The Workforce Development committee hosted an Employment Free Choice awareness seminar at the end of June that was a great success.

And now, with the banquet behind us, that means we have a golf tournament coming up in October. The truth is, the golf committee has been hard at work for some time now and is well on its way to another great tournament. This is always a premiere event for the SCIA and believe it or not there are only a few morning spots open. Make sure you contact the SCIA office for team and sponsorship opportunities that are available.

The next General Membership Meeting will be held on August 18, 2009 at the Quality Hotel and our scheduled guest speaker is Economist Loren Scott. I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting. Don't forget to visit our website at [www.sciaonline.net](http://www.sciaonline.net) for information and updates.

Sincerely,

Anthony (Tony) Boudreaux  
SCIA PRESIDENT

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# \$166M Toll Bridge Opens Over La. 1

By: Mike Brossette, *Tri-parish Times*

The new \$166 million La. Highway 1 bridge over Bayou Lafourche at Leeville opened last week with a ribbon-cutting ceremony near the foot of the north side approach. The fixed-span bridge, named for late Greater Lafourche Port Commission President Tommy Doucet, will have a toll of \$2.50 per passenger vehicle and \$5 for trucks and buses heading south beginning July 27.

Vehicles must have a toll tag to cross, though a one-time crossing can be purchased at a 24-hour kiosk at the customer service center in Golden Meadow located on South Alex Plaisance Boulevard.

Tolls will be used to pay off the debt from building the bridge. "This is an historic achievement," said LA 1 Coalition Executive Director Henri Boulet. "It replaces the highway's weakest link."

The new bridge, which reaches to 73 feet at the center of its span, replaces a drawbridge that was scheduled for demolition beginning last week, according to Port Commission Executive Director Ted Falgout, who helped found the LA 1 Coalition in 1997 to lobby for money to build a new highway.

The Tommy Doucet bridge will connect to Port Fourchon via the now partially-completed new La. Highway 1, a six-mile, two-lane causeway, scheduled for completion in 2011 at a cost of \$138 million.

Another elevated highway replacing La. Highway 1 from Leeville to Golden Meadow would cost more than \$300 million, according to Falgout. At the ribbon-cutting, former state Sen. Reggie Dupre said \$600,000 had been secured for preliminary studies on the new stretch of elevated road. The local business community matched the amount, he said.

Dupre credited former state representative and LA 1 Coalition board member Loulan Pitre with making the replacement of the old bridge a priority. But a number of people had urged the bridge's construction, Boulet said.

Doucet believed the former Leeville bridge was the greatest threat to the development of Port Fourchon, Falgout said.



**Ted Falgout and Henri Boulet took a bus load of people across the new Leeville Bridge.**

After telling former Gov. Mike Foster that the port could not develop without a better highway to provide access, Doucet did not receive support, Falgout said. He then secured a financial commitment from the port commission.

U.S. Rep. Charlie Melancon (D-Napoleonville) said Port Fourchon could only service fishing boats at one time. "Doucet had a dream and vision of putting Port Fourchon on the map," said Melancon, who worked with the port commission while director of the South Central Planning and Development District.

Falgout said former LA 1 Coalition director Roy Francis also spurred the development of the new bridge. The project was anticipated to take 30 years to complete but was finished in around 10 years, he said.

About current LA 1 Coalition executive director Boulet, Falgout joked, "He can get money out of a turnip." Lafourche Parish President Charlotte Randolph called Port Fourchon the most important part of the parish. "A safe road leading there is critical," she said.

On the west side, Falgout said marshland was created to mitigate for the environmental effects of the new bridge, which has a span of 300 feet between its piers. Boulet said the LA 1 Coalition's goal is to build the new La. Highway 1 to U.S. Highway 90. 🇺🇸



**The Governor signed a check to Terrebonne Parish, which was obtained from hurricane grant money.**

# State Merges Coastal Programs

Excerpts from **Jeremy Alford**, *The Courier Capital Correspondent*

**G**ov. Bobby Jindal is searching for an executive director to lead the state's newest agency, a coastal-affairs office that's already occupying space here in the downtown Chase Building.

Legislation recently signed by the governor merges parts of four former agencies all into the new Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration, which falls under Jindal's executive branch.

Garret Graves, the governor's director of coastal affairs, said there's practically no increased costs to state government, since resources were simply repositioned.

The new office pulls from the departments of wildlife and fisheries, natural resources, environmental quality and transportation. Graves said the office could grow even more next year, since the governor's team is also considering incorporating parts of the Department of Social Services, which plays a key role in hurricane evacuations.

Jerome Zeringue, Terrebonne's former levee director who now serves as one of Jindal's top coastal aides, is temporarily serving as the new office's interim executive director.

When Zeringue hands over the reins, he'll return to a permanent position at the side of Graves.

The governor's staff is working to make room in the 2010-11 budget for Jindal's Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration, which officials believe is the first state agency of its kind in the nation.

Administration costs are expected be less than 1 percent of the office's total budget, and more than 98 percent of all the coastal-related work the agency oversees will be contracted out to private firms.

The real power, though, remains with the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority.

The CPRA was formed in the wake of hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 and has slowly become the state's guiding force on coastal issues. In a nutshell, Jindal's new agency will serve as the execution arm of the CPRA.

The legislation, by House Natural Resources Chairman Gordon Dove, R-Houma, also makes the CPRA the non-federal partner on most major projects. Its chairman, Graves, is now allowed to personally negotiate contract terms with the federal government on behalf of the entire coastline and state.

There are several instances in the new law where the word "integrated" is inserted. Dove said the intent is to have the state considering hurricane protection, coastal restoration and flood control collectively when approaching challenges.

Specifically, the bill calls for the following to be included in all comprehensive plans, if applicable: coastal restoration, coastal protection, infrastructure, storm-damage reduction, flood control, water-resources development, erosion-control measures, marsh management, diversions, saltwater-intrusion prevention, central wetlands, conservation, enhancement, mitigation, storm-surge reduction and beneficial-use projects.

There's likewise language emphasizing a new focus on marshes, cheniers, ridges and coastal forests. A number of provisions in the new law will impact the way levee boards in Terrebonne and Lafourche conduct business.


For instance, if a major project requires mitigation, meaning new land that must be built for property lost during construction, the law allows levee boards to mitigate land already owned by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, such as land found in wildlife management areas.

"That could save millions of dollars on large-scale projects," Dove said.

In particular, Dove said there are opportunities to explore between the Pointe-aux-Chenes Wildlife Management Area and the ongoing Morganza-to-the-Gulf Hurricane Protection Project.

The statewide consolidation also takes into account flood-control issues, which has prompted some north Louisiana lawmakers to push for the CPRA's work to reach beyond the coast.

Legislators are fully aware that \$100 billion or more will be needed to repair the coastline, and the number of federal funding sources available is dizzying.

About \$15 billion is about to be allocated for levees in the New Orleans area, the current energy bill in Congress has about \$30 million set aside for Louisiana's coastal master plan, and future oil revenue will send tens of billions of dollars to the state in coming decades. 

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## Performance Energy Service Announces Expansion

By: Daniel McBride, *The Courier Staff Writer*

Gov. Bobby Jindal recently joined a local oilfield-service company in announcing an expansion that will create 350 jobs over the next five years.

"Even in this economic climate, they're adding good-paying jobs," Jindal said. "Our No. 1 priority has got to be to create good-paying jobs to help our sons and daughters stay in Louisiana."

Performance Energy Services CEO Ricky LaGrange discussed plans for a \$26 million, 250-foot-long dry dock at the Port of Terrebonne. The 350 permanent jobs created are expected to pay an average of \$55,000 a year, company officials said.

Creating jobs is one of the obligations Performance Energy Services must fulfill to receive state money to help with construction. Louisiana Economic Development, a government agency that promotes state business, will provide a \$3.3 million grant toward the project.

Another \$10 million is expected from the Port Priority Program, part of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development. This money will go to the Port of Terrebonne, which will construct the dry dock to company specifications.

Performance Energy will then pay that money back with interest through a 40-year lease with the port. Performance already employs about 800 workers, and that number must be retained as part of the deal with the state, officials said. The company installs oil-production equipment and platforms offers maintenance and catering services. The dry dock will allow the company to expand into repairing boats and ships.

Company officials said they expect to break ground in the second half of 2009 and construction should take about a year.

The entire process will include dredging, bulkheading and soil stabilization. David Rabalais, executive director of the port, said he looks forward to working with the company as it expands.

"We're creating jobs while the rest of the country's losing them," he said. 🇺🇸



LA Representative Damon Baldone, Tony Alford, SCIA VP and President of the Terrebonne Levee District, Stevie Smith, Luke Theriot with Representative Charlie Melancon's office and General Walsh with the Corps of Engineers attended the nonfederal levee christening.

## Morganza Action Coalition Warns Against Group Opposed to Project

By Mike Brossette, *Tri-parish Times*

The Morganza Action Coalition issued a release last week stating that Terrebonne and Lafourche residents could be contacted by a coastal restoration group that has expressed opposition to the construction of the Morganza-to-the-Gulf hurricane protection levees.

MAC was formed in 2006 to lobby for the construction of the levee system. The Web site for the New Orleans-based Gulf Restoration Network states that the group works to protect resources in the Gulf, especially fisheries.

"Before making any donation, or joining, the group, ask questions about the most significant protection project in our area-Morganza," said Jennifer Armand with MAC.

"Any organization claiming to have our best interest in mind, ask them about Morganza," she said. "We believe in coastal restoration, but we can't survive without hurricane protection."

"If a GRN representative pays you a visit, I urge you to ask them about their organization's position on Morganza to the Gulf," stated MAC president Berwick Duval in the release. "Tell them that our future relies on the restoration and protection that Morganza will provide, and the lock, levee and floodgate system is a key component of our comprehensive coastal restoration plan."

Armand said anyone interested in local coastal restoration efforts should contact the Morganza Action Coalition or the Thibodaux-based Restore or Retreat. 🇺🇸

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## T. Baker Smith Climbs List of Top Design Firms

By: Mike Brossette, *Tri-parish Times*

Houma-based engineering firm T. Baker Smith landed at number 323 on the list of Engineering News-Record magazine's Top 500 Design Firms in the nation for 2008.

The magazine, a weekly that provides news and information for the construction industry, published the list in the April 15, 2009 issue. Companies were ranked according to gross revenue for the year.

The list contains mostly engineering firms but includes architects and environmental firms also. T. Baker Smith leaped up 143 places from the company's 2007 ranking at 466. The company placed on the list in 2006 as well.

Kenny Smith, president and CEO, said the magazine gathers information about all domestic and international business, including work with schools and energy companies, to compile the rankings.

T. Baker Smith was the only engineering firm in the Tri-parishes to make the list.

Besides Houma, the firm has offices in Thibodaux, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Shreveport and Houston.

"Last year, 2008, was a phenomenal year for us on every front," Smith said. "Oil and gas were booming. Oil was at \$147 a barrel.

Natural gas was double what it is now. Every aspect of the business was doing well." Recovery money for the recent hurricanes also stimulated business, he said, including work related to federal Gulf Opportunity Zone (GO Zone) funding.

"We had government work, industrial work," Smith said. "A lot of different things came together that drove our business."

The magazine reported that the design firms in the Top 500 generated \$90.6 billion in revenue in 2008. That amount was more than in 2007, but companies began to feel the effects of the recession in the U.S. Of the companies on this year's list, 166 experienced a decline in revenue from the previous year.

Six other firms from Louisiana were ranked on the list: The Shaw Group, Baton Rouge, No. 6; Wink Cos., Baton Rouge, No. 137; Waldemar S. Nelson and Co., New Orleans, No. 201; C.H. Fenstermaker & Associates, Lafayette, No. 272; Burk-Kleinpeter, New Orleans, No. 470, and G.E.C., Baton Rouge, No. 479. 🇺🇸

## Darryl Christen Receives Community Service Award

At a recent event, local attorney Darryl Christen received the Terrebonne Parish Association's annual Community Service Award. He received the award based on his many contributions to the community, having served in multiple roles in a leadership position.



Christen is past-President of the Houma Rotary Club, the Experimental Aircraft Association, the International Aerobatic Club, the Terrebonne Bar Association, and Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce. He currently sits on the Board and is past chairman of the board of South Louisiana Bank, and currently chairs both the Business Development and Litigation department of SLB, as well as serving on several other bank committees.

Most people who know Christen know about his passion for flying his own plane. He serves as an active flight instructor, Civil Air Patrol mentor, and is a Designated Pilot Examiner for the FAA.

Most importantly, though, Christen has fulfilled many wishes through "Angel Flights", transporting cancer patients, and has made significant contributions in a variety of ways to the "Make a Wish Foundation" for families in need. He is also a graduate of "Leadership Terrebonne," and continues to participate by providing flights for its members to view our disappearing wetlands, as well as flights for the "Voice of the Wetlands" (VOW) and numerous other organizations advocating wetlands loss. He contributes regularly in many ways to various civic and charitable organizations, including the Rotary Foundation, SCIA, MacDonnell Children's Home, Honduras Elementary School, Vanderbilt Catholic High School, Houma Junior Auxiliary, Restore and Retreat, YMCA, the Better Business Bureau, Habitat for Humanity, Chabert Medical Center and the Bayou Board of Realtors. This individual's law firm has closed well over 100 transactions at no charge for the purchasers of homes sold to them by Habitat for Humanity.

He is married to Ms. Mona Martin Christen, owner of Mona and Company, Inc., and they have two children, Kelli and Dylan. 🇺🇸



Tony Boudreaux, SCIA president presented a \$10,000 contribution to LA 1 Coalition represented by Henri Boulet, Executive Director

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# T. Baker Smith Opens New Office in Northwest Louisiana

**By: Paula Schouest, T. Baker Smith, Marketing Director**

Shreveport, LA – T. Baker Smith recently opened a new northwest Louisiana office on the south side of Shreveport, near I-49, allowing the firm to offer professional services to existing exploration and pipeline clients as well as new clients.

The Haynesville Shale Natural Gas formation located in the area of northwest Louisiana has been referred to as the largest natural gas formations in the nation. The most active areas have been Caddo, Bienville, Bossier, DeSoto, Red River and Webster Parishes of Louisiana.

“At T. Baker Smith, we want to continue to be a part of these exploration and pipeline activities. We have been providing services to clients in this area for two years, and with the continued activities, thus warranted us establishing a professional team in Shreveport,” said Kenny Smith, President and CEO of T. Baker Smith.

T. Baker Smith also has offices in Houma, Thibodaux, Baton Rouge and Lafayette, LA and Houston, TX. The firm provides surveying, engineering, environmental, construction management, and marine positioning services to clients in the Gulf of Mexico across Louisiana, Texas and beyond. 

# Terrebonne Parish Community Recycling Initiative

**Reports Parish President Michel Caludet**

In this eco-conscious environment of the 21st century, one of the most important things we can do to combat landfill waste and global warming is recycle. Because of the full backing and support of our Parish Council and Solid Waste Department, recycling options for our citizens are now greatly expanded. Three community recycling bins have been strategically placed in centralized locations throughout the parish. Bins are in place at the Bayou Cane Fire Department on West Main St., the East Houma Fire Department at the intersection of Plant Rd. and Tunnel Blvd., and the South Houma Fire Station at the intersection of St. Charles Street and Valhi. These bins will be clearly marked, and accept paper, plastics, and aluminum recyclables in a single-stream fashion. There is no need to separate or bag your recyclables, just place them in the bins. I look forward to widespread participation in our recycling program. I know that we’re all happy to see Terrebonne take this step towards a greener world. 



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# “Ice” Committee Presents Workshop - Union Potential Worries Local Business Owners

By **Kathrine Schmidt**, *The Courier Staff Writer*

Federal legislation that would make it easier for workers to form labor unions is making a big stir locally, as fabricators, boatbuilders and others find themselves battling the potential for future organization.

The Employee Free Choice Act, which stands a chance of becoming law this year because of strong support from Democrats in Washington, would eliminate some federal requirements for forming unions, and local employers aren't happy about the possibility.

“Everyone in the local region and throughout the South is concerned,” said Steve Becnel, general manager at McDermott International in Morgan City, whose 400 fabrication workers worked under a union contract from 2001 to 2006.

Presently, those who wish to form a union must get at least 30 percent of a business' workforce to sign union cards, opening the door to a secret-ballot election on whether a union should be formed. Once enough cards are signed, union and company representatives have 40 days to campaign on the question of whether an election should be held.

The bill would amend the National Labor Relations Act to simplify the process, providing for a union's recognition if a majority of employees sign union cards.

Union organizers and business interests each say the current system is biased in favor of the other.

The bill has been assigned to the House Education and Labor Committee and its subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor and Pensions.

## NO LOCAL LOVE FOR UNIONS

In a state where a scant 5.6 percent of workers are unionized - less than half the national average - Terrebonne and Lafourche parish businesses have a history of fighting off attempts to unionize the oil-industry employees and mariners whose work drives the region's economy.

The Gulf Coast Mariners Union, an AFL-CIO affiliated group, started a tumultuous four-year push in 1999 to unionize local shipyard and offshore workers. The effort was rebuffed by local companies and the nonprofit Concerned Citizens for the Community and fizzled out about 2003 after a failed attempt to attract Trico Marine workers.

In 2005, McDermott workers decertified the union they had organized four years prior.

But the new legislation and its potential for unionization was enough to lure the area's top maritime employers to a June seminar on how to keep unions at bay. The seminar was hosted by the South Central Industrial Association, a regional business group.

Among those in attendance were Jay Cole, a Colorado consultant on labor issues for Galliano-based Edison Chouest Offshore, and Concerned Citizens for the Community members.

Donald “Boysie” Bollinger, president of the Lockport-based Bollinger Shipyards, has been visiting company sites to make sure the firm's stance on unions is clear, said Ray Barker, who heads Bollinger's human-resources department.

The company, officials say, would rather deal with workers as individuals.

Barker said he expects more union activity and organization attempts, regardless of the bill's fate. “It's coming,” said Barker, who has dealt with labor-relations issues for 22 years. “Get prepared.”

The best way to avoid unions, Barker told the business group, is “to make them unnecessary by the way you treat your employees.”

## SILENCING BUSINESS

Keith Pyburn, managing partner of the New Orleans-based Fisher and Phillips law firm, talked about what would happen if the act is passed.

While a secret-ballot system could be used if union members desire, he said he's concerned it would eliminate up-front union campaigns, depriving businesses of their chance to weigh in.

Pyburn said the bill would also increase labor-law violation penalties, put a firm time-frame on contract negotiations and require binding arbitration if those deadlines are not met.

The timetable is unrealistically fast and arbitration would restrict employers' ability to promote, hire or lay off workers, he said. The latter would hurt competitiveness.

Business and union groups interviewed for this story said they didn't know of any active union campaigns in Terrebonne and Lafourche.

Capt. Richard Block, who was involved in earlier union drives and is secretary to the National Mariners Association, said nobody has approached him for advice on organizing or information about the act, even given the tough economic times.

“I don't think there's any great push,” Block said. Union members say the bill is a chance to talk about potential benefits for the middle class, which is coping with rising gas and health-insurance prices.

A typical union worker in Louisiana makes about 9 percent more than his non-union counterpart, according to a study from the Washington-based Center for Economic and Policy

**continued on page 13**



**LA governor Bobby Jindal recognized LaShip as a major project for the state being built at the Port of Terrebonne. Pictured with the governor are Derrick Bascle and Justin Getzinger with Edison Chouest Offshore.**

By: Kathrine Schmidt, Staff Writer, The Courier



**Cathy Telford was recently appointed as the Work It! LA Champion Coordinator. She is a retired principal with the Terrebonne Parish School Board. She brings years of excellent experience and knowledge to the program. She will serve in this capacity until the funds are no longer available to support the program.**

Lafourche Parish eighth graders were offered a taste of future careers put on by local business groups on April 28, 2009 at the Thibodaux High gym. The career day was put together by the Thibodaux Chamber of Commerce and Work It! Louisiana.

Approximately 390 students from Sixth Ward Middle, East Thibodaux Middle and West Thibodaux Middle schools attended, with 32 businesses exhibiting.

"It gives them the opportunity to see the options out there," said Kathy Benoit, chief executive officer at the Thibodaux Chamber of Commerce.

Work It Louisiana, a state-sponsored program put together by the South Central Industrial Association, a regional business group, has been supplying

information about specific career paths to younger and younger ages. The idea is for students, once in high school, to set up their schedules with specific goals in mind, rather than repeating coursework when they settle on a career later on.

While passing out company goodies, employers helped students connect the dots between their interests and the opportunities available. Sometimes that can be as simple as teaching a student what a profession actually is, said Norman Loeske, an investment professional at Premier Capital Advisors, speaking on behalf of the Society of Louisiana CPAs.

"It's workforce development," said Cindy Poskey, campus administrator at the Louisiana Technical College's Lafourche campus and chairwoman of the Thibodaux Chamber's public-affairs committee.


At the T. Baker Smith booth, Ashlee Ledet was explaining the company's activities to Gus Lujano, 14, an East Thibodaux student who said he's interested in becoming an artist or movie actor.

"If you like drawing, you should definitely think about drafting," Lee said, explaining how draftsmen at the Houma engineering and survey firm help with the design of projects from roads to driving ranges.

Lujano isn't sure yet whether his interest in forming images of nature

and people would translate into a job like that. But another participant, Brandon Gauthier, 15, said his interest in science and math are steering him to a job like the one at T. Baker Smith. "It has many different aspects," he said of the career path. And the event, he said, "was really helpful."

"I liked everything," said Summer Sauter, another East Thibodaux eighth-grader interested in a medical career. "They showed us a lot, and told us a lot."

Even if the students don't make up their minds today, Ledet of T. Baker Smith said the event helps the company and is still "wonderful" with getting their thinking going in that direction. "It's important to impress upon the youth that it's important to stay in school," she said. "Everybody is meant to do something." 



**Chiropractor's assistant Christie Neil checks Kasey Stone's blood pressure Tuesday morning at a career fair at Thibodaux High School. Kasey, an eighth-grader at Sixth Ward Middle School, was at the fair to learn about future careers. The event was sponsored by the Thibodaux Chamber of Commerce and SCIA's Work It! Louisiana program.**



**Shell makes Work It! presentation along the river to students**



**Young Memorial Technical College show students the diving program at their recent Career Link event**



**Maria Burke speaks at East St. John as part of the Work It! Speaker's Bureau**


## WE HAVE JOBS LOUISIANA Job Expo Scheduled For August

**WE HAVE JOBS LOUISIANA Job Expo**, presented by Sunburst Media, is scheduled for Wednesday, August 26, 2009 from 10am to 3pm at the Houma-Terrebonne Civic Center. Admission to the expo is free. There will be break out rooms for interviews as well as seminars such as “hiring the right person for the right job”, “interviewing techniques”, and “job assessments”.

South Louisiana Economic Council (SLEC) and Terrebonne Economic Development Authority (TEDA) are also going to have representatives present at the event.

In addition to the Expo, Sunburst Media is offering a virtual expo. The Virtual **WE HAVE JOBS LOUISIANA Job Expo** allows businesses to advertise their specific needs for sixty (60) days online. Key search words will be used to capture leads on the internet to maximize interests of both employers and employees.

**WE HAVE JOBS LOUISIANA Job Expo** will be promoted on all four of Sunburst Media’s radio stations & websites and will continue to be on until October 25, 2009, when the Virtual Expo ends. The website to access the Job Expo is [www.WeHaveJobsLA.com](http://www.WeHaveJobsLA.com). Access to the link is also available on our stations’ websites, [www.C1075.com](http://www.C1075.com), [www.Rock1063.com](http://www.Rock1063.com), and [www.MyOldies967.com](http://www.MyOldies967.com).


Information for business participation in the **WE HAVE JOBS LOUISIANA Job Expo** may be obtained by contacting Danny Fletcher or Synde Devillier at (985) 851-1020. 

## Synergy Bank Ranked Among Nation’s Best Performers

Synergy Bank was recently ranked 14th in the nation for best-performing community banks between \$100 million and \$3 billion in size, according to the American Banking Association Banking Journal. The rankings are based on consolidated statistics from the highest regulatory reporting level available for each institution.

“Being ranked among the nation’s Top Community Banks is a significant achievement and a great honor for Synergy,” said President and CEO Jerry P. Ledet Jr. “It is a result of the hard work by our dedicated team of banking professionals who are 100 percent committed to providing Houma-Terrebonne with community banking services that are second to none. It is also a testament to the solid leadership provided by our board of directors, and the wisdom of employing sound, conservative and time-tested banking practices. It validates our premise that together we are stronger.”

Synergy has four branches in the region. The bank’s deep local roots and recent expansion into the community of Gray, along with its broad range of consumer and commercial services, continues to attract customers who are looking for a secure alternative to the volatility of larger institutions.

In the midst of industry challenges, Ledet said Synergy will stay the course that has served it so well, continuing to focus on the banking fundamentals of service excellence, responsiveness, and attractive products and pricing to improve the customer experience. Synergy Bank reported total assets of \$260,550,000 as of June 30, 2009. 



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# 256 Companies Sought Re-entry Badges

By: Mike Brossette, *Tri Parish Times*

Figures on the number of companies and individual people that have applied for badges allowing reentry following hurricanes into Terrebonne Parish were announced by Terrebonne Economic Development Authority business liaison Sheila Bella at last week's TEDA board meeting in Houma.

TEDA was tapped by Terrebonne Parish government beginning this year to issue the badges, which are divided into tiers. Companies and individuals most critical to helping the parish economy to recover after a hurricane are allowed back first, followed by those considered less critical.

Badges cost \$5. Though hurricane season started on June 1, the most active part of the season begins in August. Between May 28 and July 15, 504 badges were issued, Bella said.

Two hundred and fifty-six companies and 3,216 individuals applied for the badges. During the period, 97 applications were denied. The status of 488 badges was pending approval.

TEDA CEO Mike Ferdinand said the applicants who were turned down did not meet the criteria to receive badges. Lafourche and St. Mary parishes have similar programs run by their offices of emergency preparedness.


Also at the meeting, the TEDA board adopted a plan to replace low and moderate income housing that is demolished using federal Community Development Block Grant funds.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development, which runs the CDBG program, issued a rule in 1988 stating that any agency receiving the funds has to adopt a residential anti-displacement plan.

Bella is TEDA's designated anti-displacement representative. TEDA will provide relocation assistance to any household displaced by the demolition of low-income housing under the CDBG program. Replacement housing would be provided within three years.

The agency will have to submit to the state information indicating how the replacement housing will be funded and its location. Information would also need to be given about the demolition of property.

TEDA also adopted a citizen participation plan required to receive CDBG funds. The agency pledged to attempt to notify all residents, particularly low-income residents, that application for CDBG funds is being made that could be used in their area.

TEDA will hold public hearings that will be announced through community organizations and the distribution of leaflets. 

*Note: If you have a business, you should look into your reentry status as soon as possible. In Terrebonne Parish, contact TEDA at 873-6890 and in Lafourche Parish, contact the Sheriff's office at 448-2111.*



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## CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF (February 5th - March 7th, 2010)

- Tennessee Williams' classic tale of a dysfunctional family consumed by greed, hypocrisy, and mendacity.

## CONFEDERACY OF DUNCES (April 9th - April 18th, 2010)

- A staged reading starring John "Spud" McConnell as Ignatius J. Reilly

## GOING TO JACKSON (April 23rd - May 2nd, 2010)

- A one man comedic tale written and performed by Jamie Waxman.

All shows are Friday and Saturday nights at 7:30 and Sunday at 2:30 (unless otherwise noted). Regular ticket prices will be \$23 and opening nights will be \$30 and include the after parties.

For tickets and information please call 1-888-99-BAYOU (22968) or visit us online at [www.bayouplayhouse.com](http://www.bayouplayhouse.com)



Upper: Gulf Island Fabrication hosted a meeting with the Terrebonne Port Director and the Terrebonne Levee District to discuss the lock on the Houma Navigation Canal as part of an IGA program.

Left: SCIA honors former senator Reggie Dupre.



The Foundation also presented a check (\$5,000) to Mark La Point as an SCIA scholarship recipient.



Louisiana State Representative Gordon Dove and his family presented donations to Restore or Retreat (\$2,500) and Morganza Action Coalition (\$10,000) from the Gordon "Bubba" Dove Foundation.

# Jindal Touts Job Creation As Priority - continued

## continued from front page 1

After repeating former U.S. Rep. Billy Tauzin's comment that "half of Louisiana is under water and half is under indictment," Jindal countered with more positive news.

He said equipment manufacturer Gardner Denver Thomas intended to close its operation in Louisiana, with a loss of 75 jobs, and keep its operation in Wisconsin. However, the company changed its mind.



"They said the reality in Louisiana is better than the perception," Jindal said. "In Wisconsin they're on defense, (Louisiana's) on offense."

As part of his workforce development initiative last year, Jindal modernized the name of the state Department of Labor to the Louisiana Workforce Commission. He said his administration has spent \$200 million

on technical and community colleges in the state, including money for the expansion of Fletcher Technical Community College in Houma.

Still, 70 percent of companies seeking to relocate to Louisiana say they would need more skilled workers, Jindal said.

"We're not a poor state, we're rich," he said. "We have 30 percent of the nation's fisheries, five of the nation's biggest ports. We've had poor leadership, but we're not a poor state. We need to compete based on our people. We need the best skilled workforce in the world."

Besides helping to create jobs, Jindal said his administration has benefited Terrebonne in other ways. The

parish received a \$135,714 Community Water Enrichment Fund grant from the state to extend water lines along Grand Caillou Road and two Byrne/JAG grants totaling \$168,502 for law enforcement.

The Byrne grants are federal but are administered through the state. The grants will fund technology upgrades at the sheriff's office and in Terrebonne Parish government.

Jindal also pointed out that during his administration Terrebonne has received \$7.8 million for road improvement projects from the state, including work in the southern part of the parish and \$2.7 million for resurfacing part of U.S. Highway 90 between La. Highway 311 and the Lafourche Parish line.

Wrapping up the talk, Jindal said the Legislature was able to cut \$700 million from the state budget during its tough last session that ended in June.

"We'll do more with less," he said. "These are Louisiana solutions, not Democrats or Republicans. The budget challenges won't go away. We need to eliminate inefficiencies and outsource what can be privatized." Jindal said he will consider no strategy that does not involve creating jobs.

At the end of his talk, Jindal presented Terrebonne officials with \$139 million worth of state grant money, most of it planned for use in hurricane recovery. Terrebonne's share of state money was the largest parish award. Part of the money - \$16 million - will go toward work on storm protection, still our area's most pressing need.

In Lafourche, Jindal presented a check for more than \$40 million, money that will go toward the same goals. 🇺🇸

## "Ice" Workshop - continued

### continued from page 8

Research commissioned by the AFL-CIO. Low-wage workers make 17 percent more, the study says.

### A NATIONAL MOVEMENT


Union membership also increases the likelihood that female workers will have pensions and younger workers will have health insurance. It can also result in higher wages for Latino and black workers, said Julie Cherry, secretary/treasurer for the Louisiana AFL-CIO.

Cherry said the general workforce enjoys many of the gains won by unionized labor.

Brent Petit is president of the Thibodaux Central Labor Council, the branch of the AFL-CIO that covers a six-parish region that includes Terrebonne and Lafourche.

He said the group doesn't have anything specific planned locally in relation to the act, but he hopes the law can spark discussions about workers' welfare.

"There's such a big push to stifle the middle-class wages," Petit said. "You're starting to see a national movement. We're hoping we're going to see a movement to uplift the bottom end." 🇺🇸



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