



# ANNUAL REPORT



# Message from the President



Kevin Murphy



Collaboration: to work jointly with others or together. It's something that WTIA does very well. By working with all of our economic development allies, we're able to create investment and employment opportunities throughout our region. By amplifying the advantages and opportunities in Tennessee, the WTIA staff provided information to thirty-seven companies and witnessed at least twelve company visits in fourteen communities. WTIA's collaboration makes a difference in our communities.

The West Tennessee Industrial Association continues to be a very professional organization for providing information to those companies seeking to relocate or expand their operations. Consultants, industrial realtors, site search professionals and corporate officers continue to rely on our information and services. Collaborative energies allow us to sustain our economic efforts and wellbeing.

Community development is such a critical component to our success and the overall mission of WTIA. Competition for new investments has never been greater. Our communities have to continue to anticipate needs, prepare themselves for corporate consideration, and execute their game plan. Your staff spends time and effort in assisting our communities and sub-regions with the strategic positioning and

overall community preparedness efforts. We have to be ready before the investment opportunity presents itself, industrial or retail. WTIA helps provide the tools that are necessary to make a competitive difference. Accurate data, website updates, Foreign Trade Zone presentations, certified sites, Virtual Buildings, prospect visit strategy and planning all become part of the process.

Your Executive Committee continues to stay focused and grounded to the mission at WTIA, and strives to be forward thinking regarding strategies and marketing efforts to accomplish our goals. Your continued input and support allows us to maintain a very professional and aggressive organization. I assure you our collaboration regionally, nationally and globally continues to raise the standards to identify and locate projects and create more opportunities for our customers.

My hopes are for another successful year for our region and because of your time, money and efforts, the West Tennessee Industrial Association continues to make a positive difference. Thank you for your support, past, present and future.

# Message from WTIA's Executive Director



Mike Philpot, CEcD



In looking back over past annual reports of the Association, I've noticed how West Tennessee has never taken for granted the successes and growth that have occurred. Traditionally our low unemployment rates, productive workforce, and progressive attitudes have been waypoints that have helped to guide our paths. Also, the proactive and "can-do" attitude of all our partners and communities has allowed us to leverage our assets and maximize all the challenges and opportunities that we have witnessed. Past reports speak of "uncertain times" and a volatile stock market. Sound familiar?

While overall prospect activity has been sluggish, we still experienced some good expansions and new company investments. New investments in our region did bring new jobs and opportunities. As Kevin mentioned in his letter, these successes occurred because of collaboration. It truly "takes a village" to identify, develop, and implement a project. I appreciate all of our allies from the local chambers, industrial boards, and elected officials, to the State ECD and TVA partners.

WTIA has always tried to be an entity that promotes change while maintaining stable and professional leadership. We can certainly say that our country and

world has seen and felt significant changes. Never before in our history has the global marketplace been more evident or more personal. We have witnessed just how interconnected our world has become. The time of focusing only on local issues and concerns has passed. West Tennessee impacts and is impacted by the global marketplace. Our efforts to think globally and act regionally are even more critical today. We continue to concentrate on "sharpening our axes" and assisting your communities to be prepared for any development opportunities that come their way. Website enhancements, site certification through the Deal Ready™ and Tennessee Select Sites programs, development of the Foreign Trade Zone program, community preparedness efforts, retail development, marketing of the Port of Cates Landing, the virtual building program, the Memphis Regional Megasite, and other regional tools and assets have been conducted and will continue to be at the core of our message.

The staff and I look forward to the opportunities that the coming year will bring. With your continued support and collaboration, I am certain that good things will continue to happen in West Tennessee. Thank you for the privilege of working with you.

# Action Report

## Prospects:

**12** companies visited **14** communities

## Information Provided to:

**37** companies

## Meetings:

Logged attendance at **193** area meetings



## Services:

- Conducted marketing outreach to domestic and foreign companies
- Established and maintained professional relationships with site search consultants and corporate real estate executives
- Hosted prospects during regional visits
- Toured and identified multiple buildings/sites for prospect consideration
- Assisted with prospect presentations/RFI preparation for various communities
- Assisted with the marketing of all regional assets, i.e., Port of Cates Landing, Memphis Mega Site, FTZ 283, and local industrial buildings and sites
- Assisted multiple communities with the Tennessee Select sites applications
- Continued development and implementation of the Virtual Building initiative
- Maintained websites: wtia.org; TVASites.com; ECD site; Deal Ready®
- Demographic updates
- Extensive community development assistance for all our communities
- Conducted retail strategy meetings throughout the region
- Assisted in the identification, development and implementation of retail projects through the West Tennessee Retail Alliance
- Presentations, speeches, and work sessions with chambers of commerce, industrial development boards and elected officials.
- Participated in local and regional Leadership programs
- Conducted WTIA Allies meetings to assist communities with economic development trends and issues
- Updated West Tennessee Industrial Guide



## 2013 Retail Development:

15 West Tennessee Retail Alliance Member Counties Reported 583 New Businesses Opened... and created 2382 new job opportunities. These new businesses, while they varied in type and scope from individual and family owned new businesses, such as Blue Goose Designs, located in Lexington (Henderson County) to nationally recognized chain businesses, such as Hibbett Sporting Goods, located in Humboldt (Gibson County), certainly had a positive impact on the economic development of their communities.

To illustrate the impact of retail on our West Tennessee economy, the Tennessee Department of Revenue reports that these 15 WTRA member counties reported a total of \$4,003,745,769 in retail sales for 2012. (Retail sales figures exclude Shelby & Madison Counties & the 2013 Tennessee Retail sales figures were not available at the time of this report)

## Mission Statement

"Working with its economic development allies, this Association's primary purpose is to generate and retain businesses and industries that create jobs, wealth, and economic prosperity for the West Tennessee region."



- Retailer One-on-One in Nashville
- SEDC Board Meeting in Atlanta
- Site Selectors Guild in New Orleans
- TVA Economic Developers Forum in Nashville
- TEP Event in Atlanta
- SEDC Meet the Consultants in Atlanta
- Hannover Messe in Germany
- USDA Rural Development Conference in Cookeville
- TEDC Spring Conference in Ft. Walton
- SEDC in Tulsa
- ICSC in Louisville and Atlanta
- Marketing Trip to Greater Toronto Area in Canada
- TVA Economic Development Retail Forum in Murfreesboro
- TEDC in Brentwood
- Governor's Conference in Nashville
- IEDC in Philadelphia
- SEDC Young Professionals Event in Chicago

# Program of Work



## New Business Recruitment and Development

1. WTIA will continue its focus on small and medium sized companies for recruitment purposes. We will pursue the niche of companies which meets the capabilities of most of the rural communities that we serve. WTIA staff will continue to document and report monthly all New Business Recruitment and Development activities.
2. Target smaller companies that match with our region's attributes. Targets include, but are not limited to: Food Processing/Packaging, Metal Fabrication, Plastics, Automotive, Medical Devices, and Defense-related companies.
3. Continue to develop contacts and relationships with site search consultants. Participation, when budget permits, in hosting events with site search consultants and company officials.
4. Participate with Local Communities, State and TVA on recruiting efforts to ensure coordination of efforts.
5. Continue to review foreign recruitment strategies and where deemed viable or necessary, participate in strategic marketing trips. i.e., State of Tennessee, TEP, Canada/Europe, etc.
6. Continue promoting retail development through West Tennessee Retail Alliance.

## Community Preparedness and Development

1. Maximize and amplify assets of the region; infrastructure, FTZ 283, Megasite, Port of Cates Landing, etc. Assist with marketing materials for the communities.
2. Work with communities to prepare and present proposals as requested.
3. Provide research and documentation of regional demographics, mapping, etc. that can be utilized by our communities when they are dealing with prospects.
4. Present programs, information and tools that will enhance local competitiveness on projects. (Allies meetings, webinars, hosting consultants, etc.) Offer programs not being offered by other economic development groups.
5. Training of local leaders in marketing and utilizing the Foreign Trade Zone program.
6. Continue to promote and market the Deal Ready® and Tennessee Select Sites programs and ensure their validity.
7. Implement more virtual building initiatives.

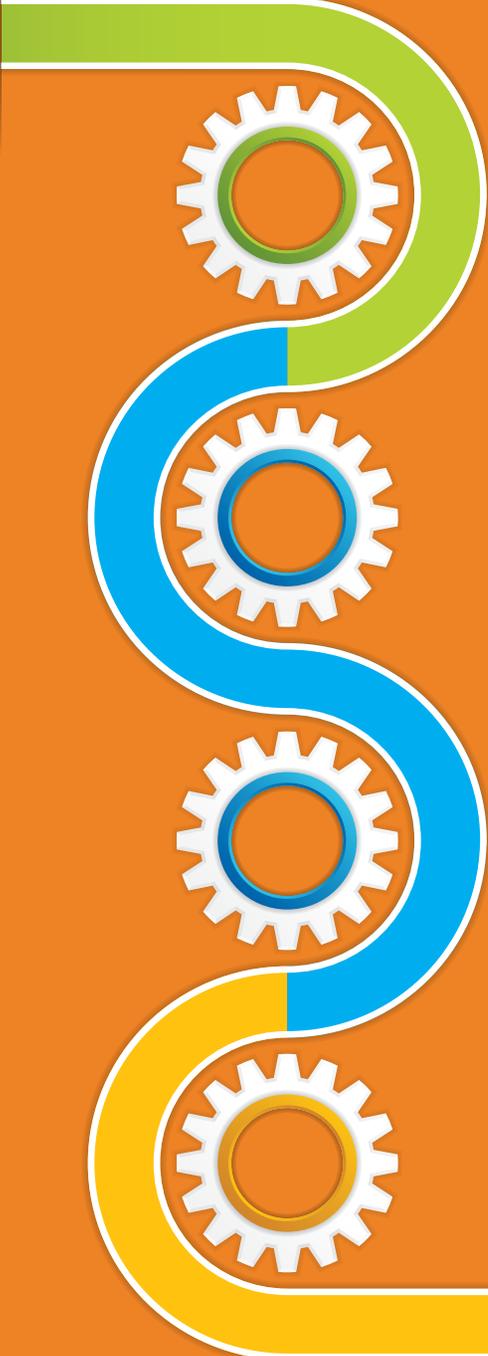
22  
new plants/expansions

1,287  
new job opportunities

\$151,600,000  
in capital investment



# Membership



<b>SYSTEM</b>	<b>WTIA DIRECTOR</b>	<b>MANAGER/ SUPERINTENDENT</b>
Bolivar Energy Authority	Terry Brown	John Fortune
City of Brownsville Utility Department	George Chapman	Regie Castellaw
Dyersburg Electric System	Dwight Hedge	Steve Lane
Forked Deer Electric Cooperative	Keith Warren	Harold Willis
Gibson Electric Membership Corporation	Mack Goode	Dan Rodamaker
Humboldt Utility Department	Calvin Campbell	Alex Smith
Jackson Energy Authority	Ken Marston	Jim Ferrell
Lexington Electric System	Jeff Griggs	Jeff Graves
Milan Public Utilities	Chris Crider	David Scarbrough
Newbern Light & Water Department		Sandy Hill
Pickwick Electric Cooperative	Ronnie Fullwood	Karl Dudley
Ripley Power & Light Company	Phillip Jackson	Mike Allmand
Southwest TN Electric Membership Corporation	Hugh H. Harvey	Kevin Murphy
Trenton Light & Water Department	Tony Burriss	Scott Dahlstrom
Union City Electric System	John E. Fowler, Jr.	Jerry Bailey

# Executive Committee



Kevin Murphy, President



Alex Smith, Vice-President



Jeff Graves, Secretary-Treasurer



Jerry Bailey, Past President



Regie Castellaw



John Fortune



Steve Lane



Jim Ferrell



Harold Willis



David Scarborough



# Board of Directors



Terry Brown  
Bolivar



George Chapman  
Brownsville



Dr. Dwight Hedge  
Dyersburg



Keith Warren  
Forked Deer



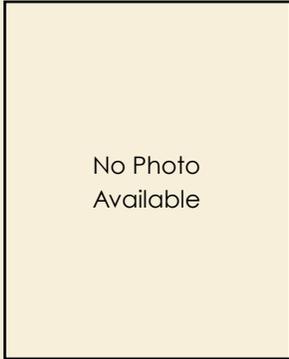
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Gibson County



Calvin Campbell  
Humboldt



Ken Marston  
Jackson



Jeff Griggs  
Lexington Electric System



Mayor Chris Crider  
Milan



Sandy Hill  
Newbern



Ronnie Fullwood  
Pickwick



Phillip Jackson  
Ripley



Hugh Harvey  
Southwest



Mayor Tony Burriss  
Trenton



John Fowler  
Union City

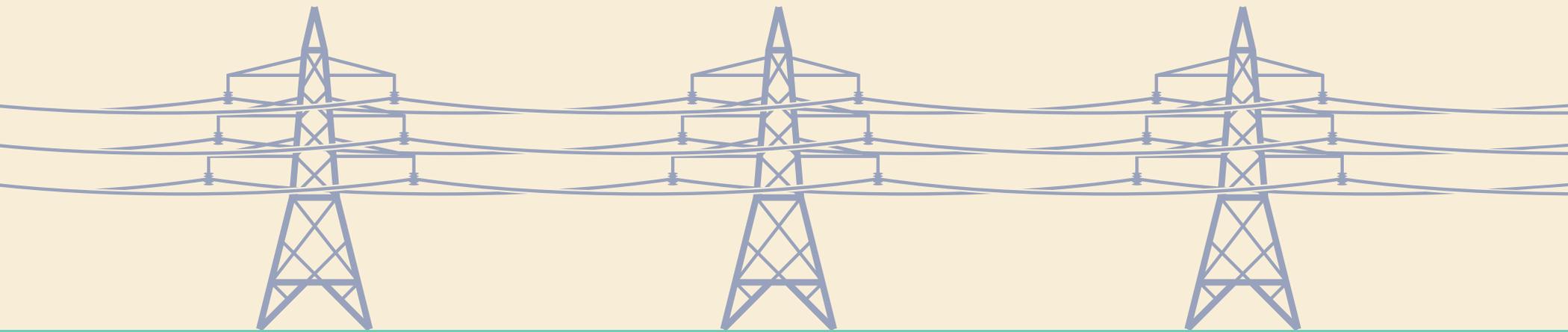
Michael M. Philpot, CECD  
Executive Director

Jim Blankenship  
Assistant Director

Kimberly Kee  
Operations Director

Nita Henry  
Administrative Assistant

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An Economic Development Association of West Tennessee Power Distributors