

May 2007

Tri-State Alliance Applies for \$5 Million Grant

The Governors of Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee have submitted a proposal to the U.S. Department of Labor on behalf of the Tri-State Regional Workforce Alliance. The **T.A.G. - Innovation and Transformation Project** outlined a plan for regional transformation. The plan focuses on innovation, entrepreneurialism and the development of intellectual capital designed to spur regional growth and prosperity.

Research conducted by the Alliance over the past year revealed a pressing need in the region for the development of basic workplace skills, including basic math, reading, and computer skills, career awareness and counseling activities, beginning at an early age, and life skills, including financial management, teamwork and soft skills. Receipt of the grant will greatly enhance the Alliance's ability to further the its vision:

The Tri-State Region is recognized as a great place to do business, where conditions are favorable to entrepreneurial pursuits, where knowledge creation and information transfer are as much a part of the landscape as the mountains and rivers and where local talent is developed and wants to stay.

The Alliance thanks **Governor Bredesen**, **Governor Perdue**, and **Governor Riley** for their endorsement of the project. Thank you also to the more than 90 business, education, and agency leaders for their letters of support.

WOTC Reauthorized

The **Work Opportunity Tax Credit** was reauthorized by Congress December 2006. The law is effective retroactively to January 1, 2006 and is extended through December 31, 2007. The certification request filing date has been extended from 21 to 28 days after the new hire begins work for the employer. IRS Form 8850, Pre-Screening Notice and Certification Request for the Work Opportunity Credit has been revised. The revised form and instructions are available at www.irs.gov.

A copy of the new legislation (P.L. 109-432) and all of its revisions is available at the Library of Congress web site (<http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas2.html>).

Save the Date!!!**Lean Office and Administration**

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Use Rapid Process Improvement ((Kaizen) Events
Make an Immediate Impact
October 2 - 5, Atlanta

www.dlpe.gatech.edu/lean
404.894.8925

**US Airways Magazine**

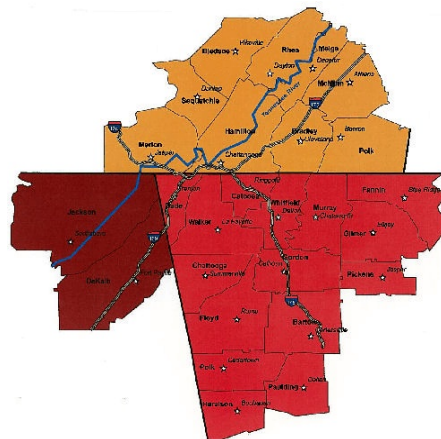
US Airways Magazine will feature the Chattanooga area in its August 2007 issue. The 28+ pages of coverage will profile the business community and economic development initiatives, local

tourism and recreation opportunities, education and healthcare resources, real estate, etc.

You can participate in the profile by submitting story ideas and/or advertising in the magazine. Your ad will be seen by over 3 million travelers. To obtain more information, contact Layne Straka (laynestraka@paceco.com) or J. Ed. Marston (jmarston@chattanooga-chamber.com).

Alabama Agency Best in Nation

Site Selection magazine picked Alabama's industrial recruitment agency as the best in the nation. In selecting the winner, the magazine considers 10 factors involving new plant activities in each state. Five-hundred eighty-six companies located or expanded in Alabama in 2006.



ProLiteracy Worldwide Study

ProLiteracy Worldwide recently issued a report, "**The State of Adult Literacy 2006**," The report expresses concern about America being able to compete effectively against global competitors due to its decline in adult literacy. The study found that 93 million adults out of our estimated population of 221 million have difficulty reading a bus schedule and filling out a job application.

Even more alarming is the drop in college graduates reading proficiency levels. In 1997, 40% with postsecondary degrees scored at "Proficient," the highest of five category levels. By 2003, the "Proficient" level was only 31%.

The entire report, including recommendations for action, is available on ProLiteracy Worldwide's web site at www.proliteracy.org/downloads/stateoflit06pdf.pdf.

Workplace Spanish Books/CDs

Workplace Spanish®, Inc. has developed materials to help managers and associates learn workplace Spanish. The books and CDs do not teach grammar. They teach Spanish pronunciation and how to say terms and expressions that are relevant to work and everyday conversation. For more information about the materials, visit www.workplacespanish.com.

Economic Development Symposium

The **Economic Development Administration** (EDA) and its local office will present a one-day Regional Development Symposium in Atlanta, Georgia on June 14. The symposium will focus on regional strategies, policies, and best practices to create jobs and economic opportunity. The title of the Atlanta symposium is Disasters and Economic Dislocations, Building a Disaster-Resistant Economy. Information about Atlanta and the Kansas City symposium to be presented September 26 is available at <http://www.iedconline.org/EDASymposia/index.html>. Attendance is free but you must register.

Directory of Occupations

The **Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division**, has published the fifth edition of the Service Contract Act (SCA) Directory of Occupations. The directory provides a list of occupations most often included in SCA wage determinations. It also provides guidance for contractors to determine how employees working under contract should be classified and paid.

Several basic occupational categories have been expanded and new occupations included. Many of the new occupations are for health and mechanics and maintenance and repair occupations. The fifth edition of the Directory is available at www.dol.gov/esa/whd/contracts/sca.htm#guide. A hard copy may requested by writing to the Wage and Hour division, Office of Wage Determinations, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20210.

E-Informer

The **Employee Benefits Security Administration** (EBSA) has a wide-variety of information available on line to help employers comply with the various federal rules and regulations. Compliance Assistance is available for Health Plans, Retirement Plans, and 401(k) Plans. Other topics available are Reporting and Filing Compliance Assistance, General Fiduciary Compliance Assistance, Voluntary Correction Programs, and Abandoned Plan Program among others. To access the free online assistance, visit www.dol.gov/ebsa/compliance_assistance.html.

The **IRS** is offering free on line training on **Tax Basics for 501(c)(3)s**. The online training provides the tools to help keep an organization's exempt status intact. There are five interactive courses which can be taken individually. Topics include How can you keep your 501(c)(3) exempt?, Does your organization generate taxable income?, How should you treat your workers for tax purposes?, Would you like to file an error-free return?, and To whom do you have to show your records? Visit the IRS online training at www.stayexempt.org.

The **Food Marketing Institute** (FMI) has developed programs based on their most popular education and training programs. Shoplifting Awareness is currently available for \$30 or less depending on whether or not one is a member. The course is available at www.fmi.org.

The **Institute for Work & the Economy** has prepared a roadmap for integrating immigrant workers into the workplace. The free poster is available to download at www.workandeconomy.org.

The Business Informer is a publication of the Tri-State Regional Workforce Alliance. For more information about the Alliance contact Gwen Dellinger, Northwest Georgia Workforce Development Director, Coosa Valley Regional Development Center, 706.295.6485; Mike Kennemer, Director Workforce Development, Northeast Alabama Community College 256.228.6001, or Wanza Lee, Director Workforce Development, Southeast Tennessee Development District, 423.266.5781. Suggestions or articles to contribute - contact Karen Howell, 706.277.7466 or Vandy88@aol.com.

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