

Head of the Class

Lafayette ranked as a Top 10 City for the Creative Class

The creative class is on the rise in Lafayette. Citing Lafayette’s entrepreneurial spirit and forward thinking, *Southern Business and Development* has ranked Lafayette as one of the Top 10 Cities in the South for the Creative Class.

Dr. Richard Florida first presented his “Creative Class” theory to Lafayette in 2004. With the culturally diverse history of Acadiana, attracting and engaging the creative class in Lafayette seemed a natural fit. By creating opportunities for expression and capitalizing on our quality of life, Lafayette is attracting the knowledge workers who will shape the future of the region.

“It’s one thing to say your city supports the creative class, but to be ranked with Atlanta, Austin and Nashville validates much of our community development work aimed at fostering technology and entertainment as economic drivers,” says Gregg Gothreaux, LEDA President and CEO. “In many ways, with our entrepreneurial spirit and forward thinking, Lafayette was catering to the creative class long before it became the ‘in’ thing to do.”

“When businesses can locate anywhere, they look at quality of life as a major factor in their decisions.”

—Joey Durel
Lafayette City/Parish President

Entrepreneurs haven’t just created a progressive business community in Lafayette; their reach can be felt in the arts community and even into the government of Lafayette. The young entrepreneurs of the past are the community leaders of today, and they know that in order to establish a creative class there must be government support of cultural, technological, educational and lifestyle initiatives. They also know that quality of life is a deciding factor on where to live for the upwardly mobile.

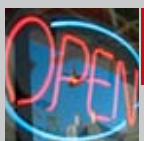
Volume 6, Issue 2 Summer 2007



Surf’s Up!
page 3



And the Grammy goes to ...
page 5



LEDA
JOB FAIR

Wednesday, August 22nd
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Heymann Center
(337) 593-1410 ext. 434

Continued on page 3



Reporting live from Cajun and Creole Country

Where culture, music, food and fun are serious business

We know Acadiana is a lush land that exudes culture. It's a place often viewed as mysterious and enigmatic by outsiders – that is until reporters from across the country venture south of I-10 to share with their readers what lies beyond the picturesque bayous.

From coast to coast, prominent publications have grabbed Lafayette and taken a spin with her as their dance partner. Articles published in daily newspapers, monthly magazines and online travelogues trumpet the value of Acadiana's quality of life and showcase how this nook of the U.S. is growing an indigenous cultural entertainment industry.

"Our unique blend of cultures and the diverse art forms they've generated – Zydeco and Cajun music, food, dance – have made Lafayette and Acadiana a magnet for those seeking authentic experiences," says Todd Mouton, Louisiana Crossroads Director. "Lafayette has an appealing mix of culture, opportunity and hospitality that visitors and residents alike have embraced."

Recent publications featuring articles on Acadiana

- "Local Secrets, Big Finds." www.travelocity.com, July 2007
- "Falling in Love with Lafayette and Cajun Country." www.fabuloustravel.com, June 2007
- "Cajun Country." *Smithsonian*, May 2007
- "Culture Cuisine – it's a different world in Cajun Country." *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, Feb. 18, 2007
- "Louisiana." *Wine Country this Week*, Feb. 2007
- "Hanging Out in Cajun Country." www.aoltravel.com, 2007
- "36 hours - Lafayette, LA." *The New York Times*, Sept. 1, 2006
- "A good time is had by all." *The Boston Globe*, Aug. 16, 2006



Festival International de Louisiane is one of Acadiana's many draws for reporters and photographers worldwide. The festival was named one of the "Top 10 Festivals in the World" by National Geographic Adventurer journalist Tom Clynes.

Lafayette named North American City of the Future

International recognition for quality of life

Foreign Direct Investment magazine (*fDi*), a London-based publication, named Lafayette in its North American Cities of the Future issue (April/May 2007). Lafayette made the Top 5 list for Best Quality of Life for small cities with populations between 100,000 - 500,000.

fDi researchers took more than six months to select the shortlists of cities of all sizes with the best strategies and resources for economic development. As part of the selection process, nine judges reviewed nominations from 108 cities on more than 60 criteria designed to assess cities' potential to attract business investment projects.

Along with Lafayette, the other cities in the top 5 are: Albany, NY; Waterloo, Ontario; Huntsville, AL; and Windsor, Ontario.

Surf's up: Redesigned site makes research easier

The LEDA website has always been a source for up-to-date demographic and statistical data, a resource for local businesses and residents, and a one-stop-shop for companies looking to expand into the area. However, LEDA has just launched our newest version of lafayette.org to make your experience even better. The new design has streamlined the navigation process, so locating what you need is an easy and efficient process.

Divided into three distinct areas, the new design targets LEDA's primary audiences: site location professionals, Acadiana residents, and business owners & stakeholders. Real estate agents and site selection professionals have their own portals to delve into. Customized requests from these portals are promptly directed to our research staff to ensure timely delivery, and commonly

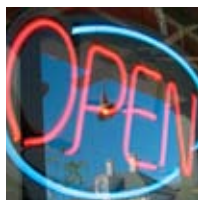
requested documents and information are easy to find. Acadiana residents also have important information at their fingertips. Need to find out how to get utility service or what to do on the weekend? No problem! LEDA provides you with a plethora of data in just a few clicks. For the business professional, LEDA's support services are outlined so that upon identifying your situation (starting, expanding or relocating), you know what opportunities exist. LEDA understands that without straightforward, uncomplicated access to available resources a company is at a disadvantage. The new LEDA website hopes to eliminate any impediments to your



The new layout of LEDA's homepage makes for easier and quicker navigation. Several months of planning and research went into the new site design and content.

growth or understanding of the Acadiana region. Check out some of our new features and learn how Lafayette, and LEDA's new website, can work for you.

Contact LEDA's Information Services department at (337) 593-1419 or anne@lafayette.org or check out the website for more details.



**LEDA
JOB FAIR**

12th annual

Wednesday, August 22nd

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Heymann Convention Center

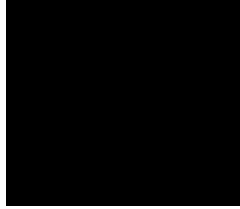
(337) 593-1410 ext. 434

Creative Class cont.

"Lafayette being the smallest community recognized speaks a lot to the significance of embracing and marketing our unique culture," says Joey Durel, City/Parish President. "This speaks volumes as to why we think it is important to embrace arts and culture in our community. When businesses can locate anywhere, they look at quality of life as a major factor in their decisions."

The magazine notes Lafayette's Fiber to the Premises Initiative, UL Lafayette, and TechSouth as key components of Lafayette's attraction.

Other cities in the Top 10 include: Atlanta, GA; Austin, TX; Charlotte, NC; Houston, TX; Nashville, TN; Raleigh-Durham, NC; Richmond, VA; Savannah, GA; and St. Petersburg, FL.



Acadiana leads the way in training grants

Acadiana businesses net more than \$8 million in funding

Acadiana businesses received more Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWTP) grants for workforce training than any other area in the state. The Louisiana Department of Labor has approved 64 contracts totaling \$8,531,926 for businesses in the region.

“IWTP funds provide critical resources for area businesses,” says Gregg Gothreaux of LEDA. “Developing a skilled regional workforce is a top priority and the state’s workforce programs continue to greatly benefit our region.”

Funded by state unemployment

insurance taxes, IWTP was created in 1997 by the Legislature to help employers around the state provide customized training for their workers. To qualify for the program, a business must have been in operation in Louisiana for at least three years and have at least 15 employees to be trained. Similarly, the Small Business Employee Training program provides standardized training for businesses with 50 or fewer employees.

“A skilled workforce is vital for strong Acadiana businesses,”

says Gothreaux. “The region’s low unemployment means a smaller workforce for employers to choose from. IWTP investments help ensure that employers who may have to hire less-experienced workers can get the training they need to increase their competitiveness and sustain economic growth.”

Businesses interested in learning more about IWTP grants can contact LEDA’s Director of Workforce Development Adrienne Young at (337) 593-1405 or adrienny@lafayette.org.

Louisiana Crossroads launches eighth season

100th show celebrations planned



Dickie Landry

Scott Ainslie & Glenis Redmond, Jo-El Sonnier & Friends, and The Lee Boys are just a few of the artists and groups who will headline Louisiana Crossroads’ eighth season, which opens with a performance by Dickie Landry & Jon Smith at 7 p.m., Wednesday, September 19 in the main gallery at the



Scott Ainslie & Glenis Redmond



The Lee Boys

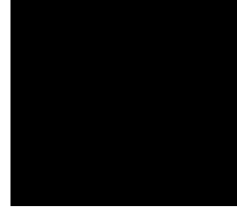
Acadiana Center for the Arts.

One of the season’s many highlights will be the return of Ainslie & Redmond, who will perform for the series’ 100th show celebrations in early October. For breaking news on the acclaimed live events, broadcasts and compact discs produced through this innovative partnership between the Acadiana Arts Council and LEDA, please visit louisianacrossroads.org.



Good News

Lafayette Parish now has the second highest per capita income in the state at \$32,892 per every man, woman and child. Lafayette is ranked in the top 14% of all counties in the U.S., and in the past decade, the Parish’s per capita income has increased 60%. Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis



And the Grammy goes to . . .

Best Zydeco or Cajun Album category energizes regional industry

Cue the drumroll. And the accordions, fiddles, rubboards and *t-fers*. In June, the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences (NARAS), which sponsors the Grammys, announced the creation of a new award just in time for its 50th anniversary celebration in February. For the first time ever, Acadiana’s unique indigenous musical forms will be recognized with a stand-alone category.

The new category is the result of a multi-year effort led by Cynthia Simien, wife and manager of Creole Zydeco artist Terrance Simien. “This is a major victory for the Zydeco and Cajun music community, our music industry and our cultural economy,” she notes. “This is a continuation of the many successes both music genres have experienced to date. Each and every year we can now celebrate together our five nominees and Grammy award-winning recordings with tremendous pride of heritage and accomplishment.”

But the nominations and awards don’t have to recognize local artists. Bands from Plaisance to Paris perform our globally popular roots music, and this new honor could go to any release the screening committee deems eligible. That means that local music industry professionals need to join NARAS, enter their

recordings and vote if they’d like to see the award come home.

Cynthia’s partner Terrance has long been an ambassador for our local cultures. “It’s now up to us as a music community to maximize this opportunity by increasing our participation with NARAS, the most prestigious



Cajun fiddler Michael Doucet at home with an Elemore Morgan, Jr. painting and BeauSoleil’s 1997 Best Traditional Folk Album Grammy for “L’Amour Ou La Folie.”

membership-based business organization in the recording industry,” he emphasizes. “With this new category we are further empowered to become the most powerful voting constituency for Louisiana Zydeco and Cajun music recordings created by our

source musicians, artists valued all over the globe for the critical contributions they have made to the cultural identity of our state and the musical landscape of our country.”

Many local industry professionals have participated in Grammy-nominated and -winning projects over the years, with album awards going to Queen Ida, Clifton Chenier, Rockin’ Sidney and BeauSoleil, who’ve been nominated 10 times since 1986 in the traditional and contemporary folk categories.

“For Louisiana French music to be nominated at all alongside major Anglo artists like Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Tracy Chapman and Nancy Griffith was a major coup,” says Cajun fiddler and BeauSoleil leader Michael Doucet. “I think it’s well deserved that we have our own Grammy category because the music we produce here in southwest Louisiana and the musicians who create it are some of the most talented people I’ve ever met and the national recognition is welcomed.”

There are about 18,000 voting members in The Recording Academy. Eligibility is based on an individual’s participation in commercially released sound recordings.

For more information, guidelines or to join online, visit grammy.com.

Photo © Curtis Durrah 1998

LEDA briefs

Employee highlight: William Ness



William Ness was recently hired as the Director of Technology for LEDA. He is responsible for keeping LEDA on the leading edge of technology for internal improvements and external assistance. He also serves as an adviser to the business community regarding various research & development and technology-related incentive programs offered by local, state and federal governments.

William is a graduate of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's College of Business with a degree in Management Information Systems. Prior to his full-time hire, he served as LEDA's technology intern for nine months.

LEDA team news

David A. Colligan was recently promoted to Business Development Coordinator at LEDA. As coordinator, David manages LEDA's efforts to diversify the economy of Lafayette Parish by attracting new business and industry to the area.

Louisiana Crossroads Director Todd Mouton has been appointed to the Louisiana Music Commission. The commission promotes and develops commercial music and its related industry in Louisiana.

LEDA Commissioner Judy Keller recently celebrated her retirement from the Acadiana Home Builders Association. Judy served as Executive Director of AHBA for more than 15 years.

Buoy and PZC recognized

Eleanor Buoy and LCG's Planning, Zoning, and Codes office were recognized by LEDA for their efforts in securing the NuComm International call center. Pictured are Tex Plumley, LEDA Board Chairman, and Eleanor Buoy, Director of PZC.



Lafayette Economic Development Authority
211 East Devalcourt Street • Lafayette, LA 70506
337-593-1400 • 800-810-7771
www.lafayette.org

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

James "Tex" Plumley, Jr., Chairman
Jim Prince, Vice-Chairman
Tom Cox, Secretary
Judy Keller, Treasurer
Max Hoyt, Member at Large
Walter O. Guillory, Immediate Past Chairman
Carl Bauer William Fenstermaker
Dale Brasseaux John Freeman
Dr. Paula Carson William S. "Sandy" Kaplan

STAFF

Gregg Gothreaux, President & CEO
Henry Florsheim, Vice President
Nikki Bourgeois, Executive Assistant
David A. Colligan, Business Development Coordinator
Anne Falgout, Director of Information Services
Virginia Jones, Research Assistant
Pamela LaFleur, Administrator
William Ness, Director of Technology
Maria Spannuth, Accountant
Stacey Strodman, Marketing & Communications Coordinator
Lena Styles, Assistant Administrator
David Travers, Maintenance Superintendent
Adrienne Young, Director of Workforce Development

INTERNS

Justin Blanchard, Katie Dallas, Nicole Gavin,
Lindsey Gothreaux, Rani LeGros

ALLIES

Todd Mouton, Director, Louisiana Crossroads
Kristi Lumpkin, Executive Director, Acadiana Economic Development
Abby Davis, Research Associate, Acadiana Economic Development
Kandice Mott, Procurement Specialist, Louisiana PTAC

CONTRIBUTORS

Anne Falgout, Lindsey Gothreaux, Todd Mouton

Lafayette Economic Development Authority
211 East Devalcourt Street
Lafayette, LA 70506-1451

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LAFAYETTE, LA
PERMIT #637