



Closed Avondale Shipyard for sale



WWLTV(Photo: WWLTV)

AVONDALE, La. -- Avondale Shipyard, just upriver from New Orleans, is now up for sale.

Tuesday, shipyard owner Huntington Ingalls announced it has hired a firm to market the facility it closed last year. The sales brochure touts 8,000 linear feet of deep water access, 206 acres, 16 major buildings and the chance to own a piece of history.



The shipyard spent 77 years designing, building and repairing ships for the U.S. Navy and other commercial customers.

Jefferson Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) Executive Director Jerry Bologna said the prime piece of real estate is now one step closer to being put back into commerce.

"We've received prospects from everything from its existing use as a ship builder, to warehousing and metal storage, rail-car manufacturing. It's been across the spectrum," Bologna said. "Hopefully, some of those, now that it is listed with a broker, can start to move forward with their purchase plans."

Andrew Croom worked at Avondale for 42 years.

"When they closed the yard, a lot of young people were out of work and out of jobs," Croom said.

At one time, the shipyard on the West Bank of Jefferson Parish was the largest private employer in Louisiana with more than 5,000 employees.

"When I started there in 1971, I remember 27 destroyer escorts," Croom said. "That was work you could see for years and years. I hope somebody brings some work into that yard."

Huntington Ingalls tried and failed to re-purpose the shipyard.

JP leaders hope selling it will give rise to a new, multi-use industrial park.

"We don't want it to become a tank terminal," Jefferson Parish President John Young said. "We want to maximize the use of it and maximize the employment opportunities because it's such a valuable piece of property on the Mississippi River."

There's no timetable for the sale of the Avondale facility and the owner did not reveal the asking price.

"It's really impossible to put a value on it from our end," Bologna said. "If it's used as a shipyard, it might be one thing, if it's used primarily for warehousing, it might be a totally different value."

Huntington Ingalls hired Colliers International to market Avondale.

New Orleans area real estate broker Max Derbes will also represent the shipyard.



Residents, officials hope for renewed life with Avondale Shipyard being sold

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A "for sale" sign sits outside the Avondale Shipyard, but it's not necessarily bad news. Most people hoped that Huntington Ingalls would be able to get things back in order, but some joint venture efforts did not work out.

On Tuesday, the company notified the Jefferson Parish Council that the property would be going on the market. The facility that once employed as many as 6,000 now employs just a handful.

Jerry Bologna is the executive director for the Jefferson Parish Economic Development District. He said Tuesday's move is a step toward a comeback.

"You just don't create more river frontage. It has got some great attributes, so I think the site is a great asset," Bologna said. "I think it's going to present a great opportunity (for) the right user to come in and purchase (the) site."

Jefferson Parish Council Chairman Chris Roberts said the shipyard needs to be made a priority.

"I think that the entire council, along with parish officials and state officials from the legislature, need to make this a priority with the governor's candidates," Roberts said. "(They) need to try and learn from them what their plans would be to try and get this property back into commerce."

Huntington Ingalls released a statement after the decision Tuesday:

"HII has decided to market the Avondale property for sale and have chosen (Colliers International Group Inc.) because they are one of the top international real estate brokers in the world, having a worldwide network and extensive experience with this type of property. Additionally, they have a local team in New Orleans that is familiar with the local and state real estate markets."

After seeing the 6,000 employee operation at the facility dwindle to virtually nothing, residents around the area are ready to see some sort of movement to bring the shipyard back to life.

Huntington Ingalls hires broker for Avondale Shipyard

By: CityBusiness staff reports August 11, 2015 0

Avondale Shipyard on the West Bank is hitting the market as Huntington Ingalls looks to sell the property.



The company has asked Colliers International, a United States-based global commercial real estate services company, to market the sale, officials said today.

The brokerage team, led by David Pinsel, Bill Buntyn and Hagood Morrison will partner with local broker Gerard Henry of Max Derbes, Inc., a news release said.

Huntington Ingalls officials said Colliers is “one of the top international real estate brokers in the world, having a worldwide network and extensive experience with this type of property. Additionally, they have a local team in New Orleans that is familiar with the local and state real estate markets.”

Jerry Bologna, executive director of the Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission, said the group has received “interest in the property from multiple prospects across a wide spectrum of industries.” No other specifics have been released.

“JEDCO has shared those leads with Huntington Ingalls and now that the property is officially on the market, the goal is to find a buyer who can help create jobs in Jefferson Parish,” Bologna said. “Ultimately, this represents a positive future for Jefferson Parish and for JEDCO as we continue to do everything we can to bring the desirable site back into the regional economy.”

The announcement comes about four months after Huntington Ingalls and Kinder Morgan decided not to move forward on a joint venture for developing the shipyard.

The two companies had been working on a study regarding the potential development which was initially to be completed last year.

Huntington Ingalls spokeswoman Beci Brenton said the decision to not proceed was influenced by “commodity market uncertainty and the associated risk for a fee-based infrastructure terminal of this size.”

Colliers International aims to attract a buyer who can rebuild the employment base and help the local economy, today’s news release said.

“We are aware of (Avondale’s) significance to both the local and state economies and we look forward to achieving a positive outcome for our client, the future owner and the citizens of Jefferson Parish,” said Colliers regional managing director David Pinsel.

Huntington shut down operations at the shipyard late last year and consolidated to its shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi. Brenton said in April that about 200 people still worked at the Avondale shipyard.

THE NEW ORLEANS ADVOCATE

Global firm hired to market idled Avondale shipyard facility, recognizes facility's 'significance'

Global company, local broker team in sale effort

RICHARD THOMPSON | RTHOMPSON@THEADVOCATE.COM

Aug. 15, 2015

Avondale shipyards, once a bustling place, is now largely a ghost town overseen by a maintenance crew.. Avondale Shipyard, once Louisiana's largest private employer, is up for sale.

Huntington Ingalls Industries' facility along the West Bank of the Mississippi River is being marketed by Colliers International Group Inc, a commercial real estate services firm.

Until this year, Huntington Ingalls was working with **Kinder Morgan**, one of the country's largest pipeline and terminal operators, to transition the aging facility into a commercial manufacturer for the once-booming oil and gas industry.

The shipyard is designed for light and heavy manufacturing. Avondale workers finished building the yard's last scheduled components for a U.S. Navy warship in late 2014, and a small crew has remained on-site to maintain the facility and its assets.

Colliers' brokerage team will partner with local broker Gerard Henry, of Max Derbes Inc., in the effort to sell the property.

The Avondale facility consists of 206 acres that include more than 7,900 feet of riverfront access. It also provides users deepwater access. The facility has been developed incrementally since 1938.

Colliers said its goal is to attract a buyer capable of rebuilding an employment base at the facility.

"We are aware of its significance to both the local and state economies and we look forward to achieving a positive outcome for our client, the future owner and the citizens of Jefferson Parish," Colliers Regional Managing Director David Pinsel said.

Colliers International Group is a publicly traded company specializing in global commercial real estate services with more than 16,300 professionals operating from 502 offices in 67 countries.

News that Colliers is marketing the facility renewed optimism among some local officials.

Jefferson Parish President John Young said Tuesday that having the facility up for sale is "a positive step in the right direction."

"I think all options are on the table," he said.

Likewise, Michael Hecht, president and CEO of Greater New Orleans Inc., said it's a sign that Huntington Ingalls is serious about finding a taker.

"It signals a real activity to go and find a single master tenant or other productive uses of the site," he said. "With development on the river at record levels, I have no doubt that there will be significant interest in a site with the attributes of Avondale."

In late 2011, defense giant Northrop Grumman Corp. shocked the region by announcing plans to close Avondale and consolidate its shipbuilding operations in Mississippi. It later spun off its shipbuilding division into Huntington Ingalls.

The number of workers at the Avondale site began sliding sharply in 2013 after work wrapped up on the last Navy warship built from the keel up.

After years of uncertainty over its fate and any potential of stemming large job losses, local and state officials last year expressed frustration over the company's mixed approach, publicly stating it would likely close the facility even as it looked for a manufacturing partner.

A handful of ideas have been floated in recent years for the shipyard's potential second act, including converting it into a general-purpose industrial park like what happened in Philadelphia in the mid-1990s after the country's oldest naval shipyard closed. But that idea and others went nowhere, stymied in part, officials said, by Huntington Ingalls' previous unwillingness to part with the site.



8.5.15

Governor Jindal And Incitec Pivot Chairman Paul Brasher Highlight Completion Of Ammonia Tank For Industrial Project In Jefferson Parish

Combined with upgrades by Cornerstone Chemical Company, project will result in more than \$1 billion capital investment and over 540 new direct and indirect jobs

WAGGAMAN, La. — Today, Gov. Bobby Jindal and Incitec Pivot Limited Chairman Paul Brasher highlighted the dedication of a new ammonia tank as part of an \$850 million ammonia plant to be operated by the IPL subsidiary, Dyno Nobel. The overall ammonia plant is 75 percent complete and is scheduled to begin operating in the third quarter of 2016. The facilities are located at Cornerstone Chemical Company's Fortier Manufacturing Complex on the west bank of the Mississippi River in Jefferson Parish.

In ceremonies at the plant site today, LED Secretary Steven Grissom and LED Executive Director of Workforce Development Programs Jeff Lynn joined IPL Chairman Brasher in unveiling a commemorative plaque recognizing the completion of the ammonia tank, a major component of what will be a total capital investment project of \$1.025 billion.

In addition to the investment by Australia-based Incitec Pivot Limited, Cornerstone Chemical Company is completing \$175 million in upgrades and infrastructure expansion at the site, where IPL subsidiary Dyno Nobel will produce up to 800,000 metric tons of ammonia annually. The project will create 65 new direct jobs shared between Dyno Nobel and Cornerstone Chemical Company while retaining 441 existing Cornerstone jobs. LED estimates the project will result in another 477 new indirect jobs, for a total of more than 540 new jobs in the state. Salaries for the new direct jobs will average more than \$55,700 per year, plus benefits. In addition, construction employment has reached as many as 1,000 jobs at peak activity over the three-year construction period.

Gov. Jindal said, "The completion of a key component of this international investment in Louisiana's chemical corridor signals the strength of Louisiana's economy and our outstanding

business climate. Louisiana's ability to produce essential petrochemical products for the world is unsurpassed. Today, Louisiana represents the new frontier for business opportunity, and we're proud that companies like Incitec Pivot Limited, Dyno Nobel and Cornerstone Chemical are laying the foundation for global production needs here in Louisiana. By retaining and creating many valuable jobs for families in our state, projects like these are supporting our work to make Louisiana the best place in the world to live, work and raise a family."

Dyno Nobel has partnered with Cornerstone Chemical Company on the ammonia plant project and utilized the LED FastStart[®] program, the nation's top-ranked state workforce training program. This program has assisted in the training of a local team of specialists who have been recruited to run the plant when it becomes operational. LED FastStart has worked with Dyno Nobel's Louisiana plant-based employees in undertaking a comprehensive training program in preparation for the plant coming online.

"Our decision to invest in Louisiana was based on strong support from the Louisiana government and Jefferson Parish, who have worked closely with our company in making the project a reality in a timeframe that is to be commended," Brasher said. "In addition, the support from local contractors and businesses, and the employment of local people has been impressive and makes the project a local and regional activity. The world-class ammonia plant, when completed in the third quarter of 2016, will be a step change for our U.S.-based Dyno Nobel business, which operates across many U.S. states supporting the hard rock and coal industries, as well as the construction and seismic industries and customers who will take the product."

To attract the ammonia plant project, LED's Business and Expansion Retention Group, or BERG, worked closely with JEDCO, the Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission, and Greater New Orleans Inc., or GNO Inc. In addition to providing LED FastStart services, the state's competitive incentive package included the Industrial Tax Exemption and Quality Jobs programs for Dyno Nobel and Cornerstone Chemical Company, and a Modernization Tax Credit of \$3 million, claimed over five years, for Cornerstone.

Groundbreaking for the project occurred in August 2013, with KBR Inc. providing turnkey engineering, procurement, construction and commissioning services, including world-scale ammonia technology for what will be the seventh ammonia plant globally for Incitec Pivot Limited. All large mechanical equipment has been erected at the Jefferson Parish plant site, where 85 percent of the structural steel is in place in advance of the late 2016 completion date.

"I want to thank Dyno Nobel for its continued investment into Jefferson Parish," Jefferson Parish President John Young said. "This project is a result of the collaborative efforts of our local, regional, and state entities, and I couldn't be more excited about the impact that it has already had on our community. Dyno Nobel has created hundreds of construction jobs to build this substantial facility and it also confirms that the West Bank of Jefferson Parish can accommodate a globally competitive company. I look forward to a long-term partnership with Dyno Nobel in Jefferson Parish."

"This project has been many years in the making," said Executive Director Jerry Bologna of JEDCO. "The attraction of Dyno Nobel to Jefferson Parish represents the largest capital project

in JEDCO's long history. Nearly four years after we began an extensive and competitive international site selection process to bring Dyno Nobel to our community, we are thrilled to celebrate the completion of the ammonia tank, which will bring Dyno Nobel one step closer to operating in Jefferson Parish."

"Dyno Nobel's milestone completion of the ammonia tank for the overall plant is great news for greater New Orleans," said President and CEO Michael Hecht of GNO Inc. "Dyno Nobel is a world-class company, and we are pleased their endeavors in our region have been successful to date. We look forward to continuing to work with Dyno Nobel to ensure their continued success."

About Incitec Pivot Limited

Incitec Pivot Limited (ASX: IPL), an ASX Top 50 company, is a leading global company that manufactures, markets and distributes a range of industrial explosives, fertilizers, related products and services to customers around the world. A leader in its chosen markets, Incitec Pivot Limited holds a portfolio of recognized and trusted brands and is the No. 1 supplier of fertilizers in Australia and the No. 1 supplier of industrial explosives, related products and services in North America. Employing approximately 5,000 people, Incitec Pivot Limited owns and operates manufacturing plants in Australia, the U.S., Canada, Turkey, Mexico, Chile and Indonesia, and has joint venture operations in South Africa, Malaysia and China.

About Dyno Nobel

With headquarters in Salt Lake City, Dyno Nobel is the North American market leader in supplying industrial explosives and blasting services. The company adheres to safety standards among the highest in the commercial explosives industry. A wholly owned subsidiary of Incitec Pivot Limited, Dyno Nobel employs more than 3,000 people internationally and operates 10 manufacturing facilities. Dyno Nobel traces its roots back to the 19th century and the discovery by Alfred Nobel of nitroglycerin-based dynamite. Today, Dyno Nobel serves customers in the mining, quarry, construction, pipeline and geophysical exploration industries.



Ammonia plant to bring jobs to Jefferson Parish

By: CityBusiness staff reports August 6, 2015 0

Officials dedicated a new ammonia tank today as a part of an \$850 million plant that will be operated by Incitec Pivot Limited subsidiary Dyno Nobel in Waggaman. The plant is 75 percent complete and is scheduled to begin operating in the third quarter of next year.

It's estimated the \$1 billion project will create over 540 new direct and indirect jobs. Between Dyno Nobel and partner Cornerstone Chemical Company, 65 of those jobs will be a direct result from this project. Salaries for these new jobs will average \$55,700 a year, plus benefits, according to a news release from Louisiana Economic Development.

The plant is located at the Cornerstone Chemical Company's Fortier Manufacturing Complex and will produce 800,000 metric tons of ammonia annually. To attract the project, LED worked with the Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission and Greater New Orleans Inc. LED will offer workforce training services and state tax incentives to the company, including a Modernization Tax Credit of \$3 million over five years.

Incitec Pivot Completes Ammonia Tank Facility In Jefferson Parish, Louisiana

Area Development News Desk (08/06/2015)

Editors Picks

Compliance: Where Incentives Are Won or Lost

Industry/Education Partnerships Hold Promise for Advanced Technology Industries

Location Notebook: Economic Innovation in the "New" New Orleans

The Importance of Earnest Investigation of Industrial Properties

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The overall ammonia plant is 75 percent complete and is scheduled to begin operating in the third quarter of 2016. The facilities are located at Cornerstone Chemical Company's Fortier Manufacturing Complex on the west bank of the Mississippi River.

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"In addition, the support from local contractors and businesses, and the employment of local people has been impressive and makes the project a local and regional activity. The world-class ammonia plant, when completed in the third quarter of 2016, will be a step change for our U.S.-based Dyno Nobel business, which operates across many U.S. states supporting the hard rock and coal industries, as well as the construction and seismic industries and customers who will take the product," he added.

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"The completion of a key component of this [international investment](#) in Louisiana's chemical corridor signals the strength of Louisiana's economy and our outstanding business climate. Louisiana's ability to produce essential petrochemical products for the world is unsurpassed. Today, Louisiana represents the new frontier for business opportunity, and we're proud that companies like Incitec Pivot Limited, Dyno Nobel and Cornerstone Chemical are laying the foundation for global production needs here in Louisiana. By retaining and creating many valuable jobs for families in our state, projects like these are supporting our work to make Louisiana the best place in the world to live, work and raise a family", said Governor [Bobby Jindal](#).



NEW ORLEANS' LATEST ACCOLADES

"Second Best City in America"

- Travel + Leisure's World's Best Awards 2015

"No. 1 U.S. City for Business Travelers"

- Condé Nast Traveler

"52 Places to Go in 2015"

- New York Times

"Fastest Growing Place for Dining, Snoozing and Boozing"

- SelfStorage.com Moving Blog - (cites the New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau data that the number of restaurants in New Orleans grew from 800 in August 2010 to 1,349 as of August 2013.)

Recent Openings



AT HOME

Texas-based home décor superstore At Home opened its first Louisiana store July 9 at 1000 W. Esplanade Blvd in Kenner.

The 90,000-square-foot store brings 25 jobs to Kenner and its surrounding communities and adds to the national chain's more than 90 stores spread across 25 states.



US FOODS

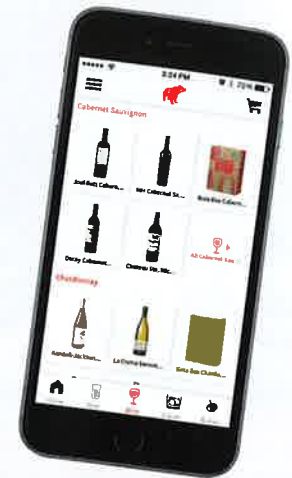
On July 17, US Foods opened a new distribution center in Flowood, Miss., designed to service more than 4,000 chefs, restaurant owners and foodservice operators throughout Louisiana and Mississippi.

The 272,000-square-foot facility will include a state-of-the-art demonstration kitchen for training and product testing, temperature controlled zones, a significantly increased selection of produce and products and two produce ripening rooms.

DRIZLY

As of July 9, New Orleans has its first on-demand alcohol delivery service — Drizly.

Partnering with Brady's Wine Warehouse and Pearl Wines, Drizly allows consumers to order beer, wine and spirits via the Drizly app or at Drizly.com and receive their delivery in under an hour. The service is currently available in the French Quarter, Tremé, the Garden District, Metairie, Mid-City, Gentilly, Audubon, Elmwood and Gretna.



UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER NEW ORLEANS

On August 1, University Medical Center New Orleans officially opened its doors to patients. The largest teaching hospital and training facility in the state, the 2.3 million square-foot complex at 2000 Canal Street is the only Level 1 Trauma Center in the region.

Built over the past three years at a cost of \$1.1 billion, UMC employed 15,000 construction workers who logged approximately 6.5 million hours. The facility employs approximately 2,600 people, including 600 physicians.

We'd love to include your business-related news in next month's Biz Bits.

Please email details to Editorial@BizNewOrleans.com.



AROUND TOWN

“Hurricane Katrina’s aftermath has been a story of both triumph and loss. It has challenged us to not only address the physical destruction, but decades of systemic issues that have disproportionately impacted the African-American community.”

- Erika McConduit-Diggs, president and CEO of the Urban League of Greater New Orleans. The Urban League will release their report, “State of Black New Orleans: 10 Years After Katrina” during the organization’s upcoming Hurricane Katrina commemorative event, titled “RISE: Katrina 10,” August 26-28 at the Hyatt Regency, New Orleans.



CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON COBALT MEDICAL CENTER IN MID-CITY

On July 10, construction began at Cobalt Medical Center, a 64,000-square-foot medical center designed to treat various conditions including traumatic brain injury, Parkinson’s Disease and more. Conveniently located in Mid-City, this burgeoning medical center project has already created 160 jobs with its contractor and expects to employ nearly 200 more.

JEDCO CELEBRATES SUCCESS

In its recently-released 2014 annual report, JEDCO celebrated its successes in support of the business community in Jefferson Parish. Included were JEDCO’s Business Retention & Expansion Program, which assisted 59 projects, helping to create 1,044 new jobs and retain 3,088 additional jobs. Total efforts represented an investment of more than \$538 million. JEDCO’s finance committee also approved 14 loans totaling more than \$6 million.

Greg Jordan, 2014 JEDCO chairman, highlighted the organization’s work on the Fairfield Vision, a strategic plan to develop 8,000 acres on the West Bank of the parish.

To download a copy of the report, visit JEDCO.org.



PORT OF NEW ORLEANS EARNS GREEN PORT CERTIFICATION

The Port of New Orleans recently became only the second port in the United States to be certified as a Green Port by GreenPort, a North American environmental certification program for the port and terminal industry.

Pictured above are port employees and tenants who participated in collecting 200 bags of trash during the Port’s Annual Earth Day event on April 22, 2015.

IDEAVILLAGE KICKS OFF 2016 ENTREPRENEUR SEASON

On Sunday, August 30 at the NOLA Brewing Tap Room, Idea Village will launch its 2016 Entrepreneur Season with the 2nd Annual Entrepalooza. The event will feature successful local entrepreneurs sharing their stories as well as details on the highlights of the upcoming season.

Applications are now open for 100 free, one-on-one strategy sessions for local startups, along with a variety of 10-week and 12-week accelerator programs. For more information, visit IdeaVillage.org.

A Storm of Change: Business Resilience, Rebuilding and Recovery

Posted: 07/23/2015 5:53 pm EDT Updated: 07/23/2015 5:59 pm EDT



By: Betsie Gambel, Public Relations Professional

This post is part of a series on the relationship between small businesses and their communities. For more posts in the series, visit the [What Is Working: Small Businesses](#) page.

August 29, 2015 marks the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. In many ways, Katrina was a blessing to New Orleans. How many times does a city get the chance to re-brand itself? In essence, New Orleans was given a blank slate. The result? New Orleans 2015 is very different from New Orleans 2005. In fact, for New Orleanians, time is characterized by either "pre- or post Katrina."

While New Orleans is still rebuilding, perhaps it is time to say that we have recovered—at least from a business perspective. No longer does Louisiana occupy the space at the bottom of national business lists; rather, we find ourselves moving to the top of these "good" lists. Given our clouded past, some may be surprised to see that recent rankings, courtesy of [GNO, Inc.](#), include:

- #1 Business Climate (Business Facilities)
- #1 Brain Magnet in America (Forbes)
- #1 Most Economical City-New Orleans (KPMG)
- #2 State in the U.S. for Business Climate (Site Selection)

- #3 Winning the IT Jobs Battle (Forbes)
- #3 City in the World -New Orleans (Rough Guides)
- #6 Overall Top State for Doing Business (Area Development)
- #9 State for Business (Business Executive)
- #14 Best City to Start a Business (WalletHub)

And the list goes on. This is just a sampling of pretty awesome results for a city that 10 years ago made national news for complete devastation causing businesses to either shut down or reinvent themselves.

New Orleans has long been known as a city that embraces diversity and fosters creativity, and it is a community that is both generous and resilient. Some say the city survived because of these attributes, in spite of the government. And perhaps it is these attributes that have enticed an estimated 10,000 young professionals to make New Orleans home after Katrina. And why it has come to be known as the city for entrepreneurs.

Having worked in public relations for more than 20 years, I had always dreamed of opening my own agency, yet I was happy working as part of a bigger team that large agencies afforded. Then Katrina hit. Tourism and hospitality came to a screeching halt. Agency leaders and employees lost their jobs or scattered to other cities. The outlook for a full service marketing agency was bleak. "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times... it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us..." Charles Dickens said it best over 150 years ago in his opening line of
A Tale of Two Cities.

Because normal channels of communication were thwarted, public relations reigned. It was back to the basics of "front porch" and grassroots communication, yard signs and community relations. With every major national media outlet in town to cover the storm, PR professionals had the chance to work with media heroes like Anderson Cooper, and to carry the message of what was happening in New Orleans to the world.

This is where opportunity comes in. Working in concert with another communications firm and a coalition of business, political and community leaders, we took our story of recovery on the road. These Fleur de Lis Ambassadors traveled to major media markets across the United States telling firsthand stories of the storm while correcting misconceptions of the city's recovery. No, we are not still underwater. Yes, we are open for business. We met with editorial boards, rocked the airwaves of radio and TV, created partnerships with community foundations and even met with professional sports teams, exploring how each could participate and support us as we recovered. New Orleanians were rebuilding their lives. With a backdrop of a shifted population yielding separated families; physical destruction requiring rebuilding; distress and desperation begging for emotional support; and limited supplies and resources requiring financial assistance, to name a few hardships, New Orleanians were rewriting their "life scripts." While local businesses identified new needs for rebuilding the city, companies outside of our footprint became a vital part of the city's recovery. Now, 10 years later, the economic success New Orleans enjoys reflects its commitment to a stronger city.

To that end, two business development organizations have risen to prominence since Katrina: GNO, Inc. and JEDCO, both of which work strategically and cooperatively to bring businesses- both large and small- to the region. Homeruns have been the likes of GE Capital and Smoothie King, along with the return of Chiquita which has been on hiatus for four decades and International Shipholding which relocated to Mobile, Alabama, after Katrina.

The 10 year anniversary of one of the worst storms of the century is certainly a time to take stock-what has worked and what has not. The city has much to be proud of as evidenced by high rankings on various lists. As someone who began her business post Katrina, I offer these lessons of the storm:

Identify opportunities.

Is there a product or service that is not being fulfilled or can be provided in a new way? My dear friend Simone Bruni, who had been in the hospitality industry until Katrina, founded her company, Demo Diva, when she realized the city was in dire need of demolition and hauling services.

Be a part of your community.

Network; attend civic, business and social gatherings; get involved. Don't think of these meetings as a "nice to do," but rather as a necessity to grow your business. At these, you will discover what your competition is doing, best practices, new companies in town, potential partners and much more.

Sustain relationships.

Reconnect with your past contacts while developing and fostering new ones. Reaching out with a systematic approach will help you grow your business.

Market your business.

Be proactive in letting people know what your business is and what it does; use traditional and non- traditional marketing tools. From special events to speaking opportunities to leveraging a national or local trend, make it count.

Tell your story.

Potential clients and customers may not remember an ad, but they will remember your story; make who you are and what you do part of your brand. And show an interest in your client or customer's story.

Help others.

Whether it is a courtesy interview, volunteering for a homeless shelter or assuming a leadership role in a professional organization, you will receive more than you give. Our city would not be where it is today had we not joined hands for the greater good.

Remember the basics.

It was never more evident than after Katrina, when technology was at a standstill, that we had to remember how we used to carry on business and resort to the roots of our profession. With unreliable internet capabilities, little broadcast or outdoor advertising, unpredictable phone service or faxes, we learned to communicate through yard signs, coffee shop meetings, fliers and personal visits-- reminiscent of how the early PR professionals communicated.

Take risks.

The Chinese word for "crisis" is commonly referred to as "opportunity." The lesson here is to do things differently in order to attain different results. I opened my public relations firm after Katrina, in the midst of a recession and as a cancer survivor, diagnosed shortly after Katrina. I have never looked back.

Be thankful.

New Orleans is a city filled with gratitude; on this 10th anniversary of Katrina, we say thank you to every person who helped us rebuild, housed us when we evacuated or lost our homes, visited us, told our story, bought our products, taught our children and even relocated here. The list is endless, and our cup runneth over. Do the same with your business. You can never say thank you enough.

Celebrate

New Orleans celebrates life through its fairs, festivals and parades, and even celebrates death with its jazz funerals. Take time to celebrate, no matter how difficult the circumstances. Whether you celebrate your company's anniversary, employee milestones or some recognition of the company, shout it out!

This blogger graduated from Goldman Sachs' 10,000 Small Businesses program. Goldman Sachs is a partner of the What Is Working: Small Businesses section.

PROSPER JEFFERSON

2015 Seminar Series



PRESS RELEASE
August 18, 2015

JEDCO & Jefferson Chamber host branding seminar

(Fairfield, LA) -A company's brand is more than a logo and a flashy color palette. It's a company's reputation, its set of standards, and all of the ways in which that information is best communicated to the world. Your company brand gives people an idea of what they can expect if they choose your product or service. It's an important part of a company's success.

As part of the ongoing Prosper Jefferson seminar series, the [Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission \(JEDCO\)](#) and the [Jefferson Chamber of Commerce](#) team up to bring you a branding seminar. Hear from two branding experts as they cover a variety of topics, including:

- Branding 101 - What is branding and why is it important?
- Branding Strategy - How to develop a marketing strategy that works for your brand.
- Branding Case Study - Hear from a successful entrepreneur who lives her brand every day.

Join us Wednesday, August 26th, at the JEDCO Conference Center on the West Bank of Jefferson Parish (701A Churchill Parkway, Avondale, La 70094) from 9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Admission is free, but registration is required to attend. The event is open to all businesses and entrepreneurs. Register online at www.jedco.org/events.

Meet our Speakers

Jennie Westerman Diemont

Jennie is the owner and creative director of [Deep Fried Advertising](#). Originally from Baton Rouge, LA, Jennie worked for several agencies and magazines before eventually creating Deep Fried in 2004. A graduate of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania, her vision for Deep Fried was to create a space where talented designers could create beautiful, powerful brands that increase the profitability of their clients, and enjoy doing it. Her passion for advertising and interactive technology is rooted in a childhood rich in exposure to the arts, and an education structured in mathematics. She has always been driven to seek that fine line between aesthetics and functionality.

Under her supervision, Deep Fried has grown to an efficiently run boutique creative and interactive agency of nine people that services over 100 clients of varying industries, both local and nationwide. Over the past decade, she has established a reputation for expertise in branding and custom web development and notable accounts include Townsend Addiction Treatment Centers, Tujague's Restaurant, Healthy Course Meals, New Orleans Chamber, Hola Nola, Pelican Coast Clothing Company, and YLC Wednesday at the Square. In her spare time, she serves on the Chairman's Council of the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce, stays active with WBEC South, and participates in several boards and non-profits. Jennie is also a 2013 graduate of the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses Program.

Kristen Preau Moore

Kristen Preau Moore is the owner and "Jambalaya Girl" of [Cook Me Somethin' Mister](#), a food product brand made proudly in New Orleans. Cook Me Somethin' Mister offers an authentic taste of New Orleans with its easy-to-prepare food products made in New Orleans with the finest ingredients. The concept for Cook Me Somethin' Mister came from Kristen's experience traveling the country to raise money for Hurricane Katrina relief by serving her Dad's jambalaya recipe. The business currently offers dry packaged Jambalaya Rice and Gumbo Base with a Dark Roux for retail and food service. Customers refer to these products as the gourmet or "craft brew" selection of Louisiana food products. Jambalaya Girl's jambalaya is currently sold in over 100 grocery stores, local Sam's Clubs and online, and on Amazon Prime.

About JEDCO: The [Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission](#) (JEDCO) is the economic development organization for the parish with the main objective of attracting, growing, and creating new business in the area. JEDCO's mission is to proactively influence the economy through the retention and creation of quality jobs, entrepreneurship, and investment in Jefferson Parish. Located in the growing [Churchill Technology & Business Park](#), JEDCO is home to a [business incubator](#) for

early-stage ventures and it also operates a state-of-the-art [Conference Center](#). For more information, visit www.jedco.org and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Vimeo](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

About the Jefferson Chamber: The [Jefferson Chamber](#) is the leading voice for Jefferson Parish's business community. As a non-profit, membership-driven organization, the Chamber is an effective advocate for small and large businesses at the local, state, and federal levels. The Chamber's mission is to work for the advancement of the business community; to enhance the economic, civic and cultural environment; and to improve the quality of life in Jefferson Parish. The Jefferson Chamber is Four-Star Accredited by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and was awarded the 2013 Chamber of the Year Award by the Louisiana Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives in the Large Chamber Category.

For more information about the Jefferson Chamber, visit www.jeffersonchamber.org, and follow on [Facebook](#), Twitter [@jeffersoncoc](#), and [YouTube](#).

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Biz Get On The NEW ORLEANS BRANDwagon: JEDCO, Jefferson Chamber To Host Branding Seminar

By 8-19-15



FAIRFIELD, LA – A company's brand is more than a logo and a flashy color palette. It's a company's reputation, its set of standards and all of the ways in which that information is best communicated to the world. Your company brand gives people an idea of what they can expect if they choose your product or service. It's an important part of a company's success.

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[Click here to register](#)

BIOTECH BATTLES

Funding cuts threaten the future of the New Orleans BioInnovation Center.

By Lucie Monk

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An incubator for biotechnology startups, the NOBIC includes 66,000 square feet of laboratories and office space at 1441 Canal St.

Photo courtesy of Eskew+Dumez+Ripple

At the core of a thriving business, you'll find an idea. It's the glimmer that attracts a hardworking team, confident investors and, ultimately, a horde of consumers.

But an idea alone won't roll out the red carpet for an innovator-turned-entrepreneur. In the field of biotechnology, especially, an intriguing concept is just the first step to entering the marketplace. Further development requires time, capital and a keen business sense.

Enter the New Orleans BioInnovation Center (NOBIC). Located on 1441 Canal Street in the city's growing biomedical corridor, the nonprofit center provides a small business incubator for enterprising scientists in New Orleans in search of legal advice, funding opportunities, workspace and an emerging, engaged local

community.

The center opened in its current location in June 2011, encompassing four stories and 66,000 square feet of space of laboratories and offices. The close proximity to Tulane and LSU's health science centers has made NOBIC an obvious destination for infant technologies growing out of the universities.

The New Orleans BioInnovation Center stimulates a broad range of companies and their products, from venture capital funds and mobile healthcare platforms to nanotechnology and dietary supplements.

"But we're in a precarious position," says President Aaron Miscenich. "[Gov. Bobby Jindal] zeroed our budget as part of his 2015-16 funding."

According to Miscenich, a third of NOBIC's budget came from state assistance. Other sources of revenue include federal grants, market rent for the facility, and private sponsors such as J.P. Morgan Chase & Co. (In November 2014, the bank awarded NOBIC a \$200,000 grant as part of a nationwide small business growth initiative.) "We can't survive with this," says Miscenich of the cuts.

Citing an overall reduction of \$1.2 billion in his Fiscal Year 2016 Executive Budget, Governor Jindal states in the introduction to the budget proposal: "To get to this point, we worked closely with department heads and officials to identify opportunities that would further reduce the size and scope of government. Our approach required each agency to take a critical look at every expense in the budget to prioritize what is essential and target what is not."



LEFT: A colorful entryway adorned in glass panels welcomes visitors to the center.

RIGHT: NOBIC President, Aaron Miscenich

Photo courtesy of Eskew+Dumez+Ripple

The cost cutting doesn't end with the center's overall budget. July 1, 2015 marked the beginning of the new fiscal year with the sunset of several state tax credits, including the Research and Development (R&D) Tax Credit and the Angel Investor Tax Credit (for individual investments in early-stage startups), both reduced and made nonrefundable by the new state budget—signed into order by Governor Jindal on June 19—which aimed to offset Louisiana's \$1.6 billion deficit while limiting unpopular cuts in higher education.

But where does that leave the evidently inessential New Orleans biotech community?

IN THE BEGINNING

Plans for NOBIC began as early as 2002, when Gov. Mike Foster's Louisiana Vision 2020 action plan identified the life sciences as a targeted growth industry for the state. "At the time, they allocated \$30 million for the construction of three wet lab incubators [specially designed to handle drugs and chemicals] in Baton Rouge, Shreveport and New Orleans," says Miscenich.

The New Orleans incubator operated out of an existing facility on Canal Street until 2004, when construction began for a new center to be built in place of the 1950s-era Wirth Building. Hurricane Katrina arrived shortly after the demolition of the Wirth Building and delayed construction until 2008.

"At that point we decided to take a step back," says Miscenich. All three incubators received additional funds for construction from the state, with New Orleans securing a full \$47 million to create a new facility from the ground up.

"The city's done a good job since the storm developing different economies," says Miscenich. "And all the strategic plans recognize the life sciences as a place for development."

Inaugurated in September 2011, the New Orleans BioInnovation Center works closely with Tulane Health Sciences Center, LSU Health Sciences Center, and Xavier University, as well as the University of New Orleans, to provide wet laboratories and commercialization assistance for local startups.

"We'll get a call from [the schools'] Office of Technology Transfer," says Miscenich. "They'll bring us in and help us understand the validity of the intellectual property. We look at the competitive area with them, and then they'll decide to move forward. We help them with a full business plan, introducing them to different capital sources. We help them form partnerships with local law firms for legal advice, license agreements, shareholder agreements, and so on."



Photo courtesy of Eskew+Dumez+Ripple

On June 15, NOBIC received the Tibbetts Award from the White House, one of three organizations in the country recognized for advocating for Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grants, which award R&D funding to young companies.

The center assists startups in applying for SBIR grants and other federal assistance, as well as securing any state tax credits that bolster small businesses during their development.

In addition, NOBIC operates the New Orleans BioFund, a loan program providing capital for startups that have struggled to secure more traditional investments.

“We’ve developed a community between all of these different pieces,” says Miscenich. “That’s the whole point of an incubator.”

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

“We’re going to outgrow our space in the next year,” says Miscenich. “After the storm, we knew we couldn’t bring mature companies. We had to seed and start up. But now we’re at the point where we can attract mature companies.”

The pipeline of ideas and technologies from the nearby universities remains stronger than ever. “But can we retain these companies?” asks Miscenich.

NOBIC is working with the city to create another space for the growing field. “What we’re doing now also is helping to bring in resources to help add value to research,” says Miscenich. “If we can bring lab operations [and clinical research] to New Orleans, that’s more reason for these companies to stay. I’d like to keep as many dollars spent in New Orleans as possible.”

At Delgado Community College, an associate’s degree program prepares students for lab technician jobs in just two years. “The jobs we’ve created have an average [salary] of \$60,000,” says Miscenich. “With just a two-year degree, you get a great job with upward mobility.”

Delgado’s program has even extended to the high school level. “They started last summer, getting familiar with the lab environment,” says Miscenich. “Now these kids see career paths in the life sciences.”



NOBIC Tenant: Better Day Health — Revolutionizing medical documentation

In July 2011, just a month after the BioInnovation Center opened its doors, Better Day Health took up residence as one of the first tenants.

“We were originally located elsewhere,” says Dr. Peter Ragusa, founder of the web-based healthcare platform. “But we moved to New Orleans—partly because of the BioInnovation Center and the spaces being provided,

plus the entrepreneurial community at the facility. But also because Louisiana is home.”

Ragusa’s experiences in medical school, when electronic record keeping methods were mandated in healthcare practices, inspired the software at the heart of Better Day Health. “I’ve long loved technology,” says Ragusa. “But I found that it would take me an hour to document a 15-minute encounter. The computer was a physical and emotional barrier between the patient and physician.”

Ragusa reached out to his brother, Rand, whose entrepreneurial experience (including a founding role in both Tribe magazine and Alpine Investments) helped Better Day Health come into focus.

Using voice recognition, mobile devices, and multiple modules for clinical documentation, the proprietary software significantly reduces the number of clicks a doctor must make when inputting patient data, effectively streamlining care and improving the patient experience.

The system, an add-on to a clinic’s existing health records programs, activates when the healthcare provider walks into the exam room. “Our system listens to the conversation—there’s no recording, we want to be extremely clear about that,” says Ragusa. “It’s more like a phone call; there’s no permanent record. But in the meantime, our system has pulled out key words and phrases.

“When the provider walks out of the room, it stops listening and proposes the most likely diagnoses for that patient’s presentation. Once [the provider] selects a given diagnosis, it intelligently triggers our system to provide a limited, specific range of options.” Factors for that specificity extend from presented symptoms and the coded level of the patient’s visit to treatment plans.

“What used to take hundreds of clicks, we’ve gotten down to three or four to make your diagnosis,” says Ragusa. “This puts technology in the background, where we feel it belongs.”

Better Day Health hosts its business operations at the center, while the software receives hands-on testing by doctors in clinics. “[NOBIC] isn’t a lab space for us,” says Ragusa, “but it’s right across the street from the Tulane Medical Center, LSU Health Sciences Center, and the new VA Center. All of which are huge for us as a fledgling healthcare company.”

The entrepreneurial brothers both see a momentum in New Orleans, extending beyond biotechnology into the business community as a whole. “I’d call it the renaissance of New Orleans,” says Ragusa. “You can see with the construction and all the energy and enthusiasm. It’s a wonderful place. It’s always been a wonderful place, and I think it just gets better every year.”



NOBIC Tenant: InnoGenomics

Another of NOBIC's first tenants, InnoGenomics, already had significant roots in the New Orleans biotechnology community, as well as small business incubators, at its conception.

In 1991, Innogenomics CEO and President Sudhur Sinha, Ph.D., founded ReliaGene Technologies in the Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) incubator. The accredited DNA testing laboratory, operating out of Harahan, was renowned for forensic, paternity, and molecular DNA testing. In 2003, ReliaGene used fingernail scratches, as well as technology developed by the lab for testing male DNA, to link serial killer Derrick Todd Lee to one of his victims, GERALYN DeSoto.

After Hurricane Katrina, the state contracted with Sinha to identify casualties from the storm with DNA testing. "I had a lot of problems getting results," says Sinha. "Because of the saltwater, the DNA got degraded. I had to go back to older technology to look at the bones."

Dr. Sinha continued to think about this problem. How can we get results from badly degraded samples?

His solution — a technology patented in 2010 that focuses on the analysis of Retrotransposable Elements, repeating DNA sequences that comprise 40 percent of the human genome but have been difficult to use as biomarkers before now — has applications from forensic testing and genealogy to molecular diagnostics.

Currently, the company is developing a way to both detect and monitor cancer through a simple blood test.



Innogenomics CEO and President, Sudhur Singa, Ph.D.

Photo Greg Miles

Sinha sold ReliaGene in 2007; as InnoGenomics, he and his team — including Vice President Jonathan Tabak — have worked with NOBIC in securing SBIR funding, National Science Foundation grants, and the refundable R&D state tax credits as the revolutionary technology edges toward the marketplace.

But the sunset of the refundable R&D credit, upon which Innogenomics relied for 40 percent of its operating budget, has Sinha and Tabak unnerved.

“[The credit] was enabling the company to get to [the marketplace],” says Tabak. “We would be starting to generate revenue and last long enough to develop our cancer diagnostic technology. But without the R&D tax credit, I don’t know if we’ll get there.”

“The expense is not much for the state, but it is huge for us,” adds Sinha. “We have received almost \$400,000 in tax credits from the state, then another \$250,000 from the National Science Foundation as a match. Now we’re not only losing state money, but we’re losing the federal match.”

Incubation periods for biotechnology companies can extend up to several years as ideas are cultivated into products and developers await regulatory approval. InnoGenomics and its fellow tenants have thrived in partnership with the New Orleans BioInnovation Center. But, according to Sinha and Tabak, the loss of state assistance sends a sharp message.

“The timing is very baffling,” says Tabak. “Companies like us have struggled and fought up to this point. I hope it’s a temporary setback, because biomedical is such a good catalyst here. Things are really happening, and the state needs to support it.”

With Louisiana's gubernatorial seat up for grabs come 2016, frontrunners Senator David Vitter and Lieutenant Governor Jay Dardenne have both released statements regarding Governor Jindal's new budget. While neither candidate addressed the R&D tax credit specifically, both have stressed the negative impact of rescinding tax credit refundability in such a manner.

"I would apply an objective cost-benefit analysis to all state tax credits, exemptions, and deductions," said Vitter, in a statement responding to the repeal of the inventory tax credit's refundability, a similar adjustment to that of the R&D tax credit. "I'd propose getting rid of those that don't pass that test and keeping those that do."

CURRENT NOBIC TENANTS

AAaneurysm Outreach aims to raise awareness of abdominal aortic aneurysms with early-detection screenings and support networks for at-risk families and individuals. findtheaaanswers.org.

Beginning Families Louisiana's only program for human egg donation and gestational carriers.

Better Day Health uses voice recognition, web-based technologies, and mobile devices to streamline patient care and improve the overall doctor-patient experience. betterdayhealth.com.

Bioceptive specializes in women's healthcare, innovating products for intrauterine procedures. bioceptive.com.

Carondelet Labs manufactures fluorescent dyes for widespread use throughout the scientific community. carondeletlabs.com.

GenoFAB streamlines the design, characterization and creation of DNA molecules with a software suite marketed to the life sciences field. genofab.com.

GetHealthy a mobile platform for health and wellness that connects insurers and employers to employees and policyholders in order to educate them on an individual level and personalize each policy. gethealthy.com.

InnoGenomics focuses on genetic testing solutions for forensic scientists. innogenomics.com.

LaCell produces quality stromal/stem cells for the scientific community, advocating the use of such cells in regenerative therapies.

lancell.wpengine.com.

Louisiana Funds a venture capital fund focused largely on healthcare in Louisiana. louisianafund.com.

LouisianaBio supports the growth of the biotechnology industry in the state as a member-driven trade organization.

Medical Executive Partners customizes business solutions and strategies for hospitals, medical centers and clinical research facilities. medicalexecutivepartners.com.

Meredian aims to reduce dependence on petroleum-based polymers by manufacturing biopolymers from renewable, biodegradable, non-petroleum resources.

MiniVax produces specialized therapeutics and vaccines, including an antibody-based therapeutic against pneumocystis pneumonia.

MobileQubes markets high-capacity battery packs, called “Qubes,” rented out via a network of self-automated kiosks.

NanoFex formulates sustainable microparticles that break down groundwater contaminants.

National Independent Review Organization provides web-based, independent medical reviews from board-certified physicians.

ReactWell a clean tech company that works with chemical, oil and gas, energy and petrochemical companies.

Renaissance Rx helps physicians develop customized treatment plans using a patient’s health history, environment and genetic makeup.

ResourceWorks Inc. offers training and consultation to nonprofit organizations and their leaders.

Servato provides industrial solutions for remote DC power management.

Simmons and White a professional management company that partners with promising young companies.

Solid Ground Innovations offers consulting and management services “a la carte” to other businesses.

The South Coast Angel Fund, LLC a venture capital fund focused on early-stage companies in Louisiana and across the Gulf Coast.

Theodent markets a revolutionary toothpaste that strengthens enamel using a naturally occurring extract found in chocolate.

TMS Bioscience provides specialized laboratory testing for transplant patients to monitor immunosuppression.

Transcendent Legal an innovative law practice combining technology with legal services using a state-of-the-art web platform.

Zenas Technologies a contract research firm specializing in data on the cardiovascular and central nervous systems.



Assisted living center with NFL ties to open in Kenner



By NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune

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on July 24, 2015 at 7:11 PM

The Kenner City Council gave final approval Thursday (July 23) for a new assisted living center. Developers said Inspired Living at Kenner, to be located at the intersection of **Vintage and North Loyola drives**, should be complete by September 2016.

The center is being built in collaboration with the NFL Alumni Association. It's a part of **a plan announced last month** to bring 33 assisted living centers specializing in memory care to cities with former National Football League players.

"As you might imagine, there were a variety of sites that were available throughout Orleans, Jefferson and the city of Kenner, even on the north shore," said Paul Mayronne, attorney for the developers. "It became clear this was an outstanding site."

Councilman Dominick Impastato said he is glad his district was chosen for the project. "I think it's exciting that we competed with all those and Kenner won."

Inspired Living at Kenner will accommodate 160 residents: 100 in regular rooms, 60 in the memory care unit. It also will have amenities such as a dog park, swimming pool, rear yard with a fountain, fishing pier, Tiki hut and several gazebos.



NFL players group behind plans for Kenner assisted living center



An architectural rendering of a Validus Senior Living community. The Kenner City Council will vote Thursday (June 23) on a proposal to build a facility like this one next to Ochsner Medical Center - Kenner. The project was conceived with the NFL Alumni Association as a part of a plan to provide memory loss support to former players.

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By [Shelby Hartman, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune](#)

on July 21, 2015 at 5:03 PM

The NFL Alumni Association is one of the players behind a project to build an assisted living center specializing in memory loss in Kenner by September 2016. Inspired Living At Kenner, to be located at the intersection of **Vintage and North Loyola drives**, is a part of a plan announced earlier this month to develop long-term care communities in areas with high numbers of former National Football League players.

Validus Senior Living and U.S. investment bank Piper Jaffray budgeted \$1.1 billion to construct 33 centers in the next five years. They hope to build communities that provide

memory care services close to all 32 NFL cities. They're also building one outside Orlando, Fla., where there is the highest concentration of former players in the United States.

"People are living longer, and there needs to be places for assisted living memory care. Validus is doing a very good job," Joe Pisarcik, president and chief executive of the NFL Alumni Association, said Tuesday (July 21). "We looked into it so we could say, 'Guys, if you need something like this for yourself and your families, go here.' If my parents needed a place, I would have sent them there."

Validus Senior Living has already bought the nine-acre property next to Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner. The **City Council** on Thursday **plans to vote** on the proposal. Planning Director Jay Hebert anticipates it will be approved.

Inspired Living at Kenner would accommodate 160 residents: 100 in regular rooms, 60 in the memory care unit. It would also have amenities such as a dog park, swimming pool, rear yard with a fountain, fishing pier, Tiki hut and several gazebos.

While the project is inspired by the NFL Alumni Association partnership, the center is not exclusively for former professional football players. "We take care of mom and dad. That's what we do for a living," said Steve Benjamin, chief executive of Validus Senior Living. "We're certainly excited about our relationship, but we're still serving the general community as well."

Validus Senior Living already has six Florida centers not associated with the NFL Alumni Association. They all have memory care units based on the "positive approach" philosophy of dementia educator Teepa Snow.

"It basically maps to the abilities that our patients have left. It's their existing abilities, not what's been taken away from them," said Laura Offenber, marketing vice president at Validus Senior Living. "The other thing we do for our residents, they and their families fill out a biography. It maps their life history, their past employment, their likes, their dislikes. It's all about their needs and their preferences."

The idea for NFL Alumni Association assisted living centers came about after the **class-action lawsuit settlement** in April between the National Football League and

thousands of former players. The suit accused the NFL of hiding the dangers of repeated head trauma.

Pisarcik said these projects do not mean he thinks football players run a high risk of concussions. The lawsuit was merely a catalyst. "It prompted me to be a little bit ahead of the curve and say that the guys might be in need of something like this," Pisarcik said.

Validus Senior Living has also bought land in Atlanta, Jacksonville, Fla., and Houston to build centers next year.

Canal Street Beat



NFL-backed 100,000 Square Foot Assisted Living Center Coming To Kenner

by admin • July 24, 2015 • Development, Healthcare, Kenner • 0 Comments • 576

On Thursday (July 23, 2015), the Kenner city council approved a proposal by developer Validus Senior Living to build a 104,000-square-foot assisted living facility for 160 residents at the corner of Loyola and Vintage.

The facility will feature a memory-care clinic, a dog park, a swimming pool, a golf putting green, a walking path, ponds and a fishing pier.

This is just one of over 30 of these types of facilities planned to be built in markets that house NFL teams. Florida-based Developer Validus Senior Living has a partnership with the NFL Alumni Association to build these center around the country, and has arranged over \$1 billion in financing from Piper Jaffray for development. Orlando will be the first city to open one of these centers.

The facility will be open to the general public, not just retired NFL platers.

The center is estimated to be open by September 2016.

THE NEW ORLEANS ADVOCATE

Kenner City Council approves plan to build NFL alumni-affiliated assisted living center in town

BY RAMON ANTONIO VARGAS | RVARGAS@THEADVOCATE.COM

July 27, 2015

0 Comments

Kenner will become home to an expansive assisted living center that will specialize in treating memory loss and will be affiliated with **a nonprofit dedicated to helping retired pro football players**, the Kenner City Council has decided.

At its meeting Thursday, the council unanimously approved a plan for Validus Senior Living to build a 104,000-square-foot facility that can accommodate up to 160 residents on a 9-acre lot at Loyola and Vintage drives, adjacent to Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner.

When it's completed, the "Inspired Living at Kenner" complex is to feature a memory-care clinic, a dog park, a swimming pool, a golf putting green, a walking path, ponds and a fishing pier — all of which helped convince city officials that they were getting more than the typical construction development offers.

"It's a little more of a specialized facility than what we could consider regular assisted living," said Councilman Dominick Impastato, who represents the district where the complex will be built. "It's also going to have an aesthetic appeal that will improve the appearance of the community around it."

The facility planned for Kenner is among 33 being built in areas that are home to NFL teams.

Validus Senior Living, of Florida, is working with the investment bank Piper Jaffray to spend \$1.1 billion building the centers over the next five years.

The NFL Alumni Association has struck a partnership with Validus to provide services for retired football players who are in need of living assistance and memory-loss treatment. Branded as "Inspired Living," the facilities are being built after the NFL and thousands of former players in April settled a class-action lawsuit accusing the league of unduly downplaying how dangerous repeated head injuries are.

Ground has been broken at one center outside of Orlando, less than two hours away from where the Tampa Bay Buccaneers play. While the one in Kenner isn't at that stage, a Validus spokeswoman said the group hopes to finish it by September 2016.

Despite the partnership with the NFL Alumni Association, neither Impastato nor **Kenner Planning Department** Director Jay Hebert anticipates that many ex-players will be members of the population at the local Inspired Living complex once it's completed.

While former football pros will have a home there if they need it, the main building that can accommodate 100 residents and the memory-care wing accommodating another 60 will accept regular folks, as well, Impastato and Hebert said.

Validus operates a handful of other existing centers that aren't affiliated with the NFL Alumni Association.

Kenner officials said they believe Validus chose Kenner to build a New Orleans-area Inspired Living center because of its proximity to the Ochsner Medical Center-Kenner campus as well as Interstate 10. The center also will sit on a lot that is large enough to have 110 parking spaces.

Validus is now in the process of purchasing the Kenner land from owner Robert Liljeberg, Hebert said.

Although Kenner already has four other assisted living centers, Hebert said the city should be as eager as Validus is for the new one to open.

"This is really a state-of-the-art facility," Hebert said. "It's been quite a while since anything like this has been built in Kenner with regards to assisted living facilities."



New Orleans' MobileQubes goes national with Amtrak partnership



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MobileQubes, a New Orleans-based startup that provides charging packs for smartphone users on-the-go, has partnered with Amtrak to roll out a new self-service kiosk network at Union Station in Chicago. The startup plans to add jobs in New Orleans over the next year as it expands its footprint nationwide.

MobileQubes has spent the past year testing its self-service kiosks at high-traffic venues around New Orleans, including the Mercedes-Benz Superdome, Harrah's Casino, Hyatt Regency and Louis Armstrong International Airport.

The kiosks dispense portable battery charging packs for a range of mobile devices. Customers rent the pack for a short time and return it to a kiosk, where it is recharged and rented to another customer -- the phone-charging equivalent of Redbox movie rental machines.

CEO Sean Carrigan, **whose own charging woes led him to found MobileQubes in early 2012**, said the Amtrak partnership is "huge" for the young company. Amtrak vetted several phone charging proposals before opting to partner with MobileQubes.

Four MobileQubes kiosks are currently live at Union Station. Within the next year, Carrigan said the company plans to have 300 kiosks in cities nationwide, including Miami, Atlanta, San Francisco, Dallas and Houston. Having access to Amtrak's vast station network accelerates growth plans, he said.

"As we grow with Amtrak, the sky is really is the limit," Carrigan said.

MobileQubes charges \$4.99 to rent a battery pack for the first 24-hours. Customers pay 99 cents for each additional day used. The company also sells packs for \$44.99.

Outside of Louisiana, the company has kiosks at two Hyatt hotels -- one in Chicago and one in New York City -- and a Sheraton in Chicago.

Carrigan said it is not unusual to see weary travelers clustering around the elusive electrical outlet at airports and train stations. A dying phone "adds stress and anxiety to traveling" and creates a liability as travelers congregate on floors and in aisles waiting for a charge, he said.

MobileQubes is also targeting sports venues, hotels, hospitals, casinos and convention centers. "All these venues are looking for a solution," Carrigan said.

MobileQubes employs three in New Orleans. Carrigan said the company will hire five to 10 new employees over the next year, including project managers to oversee logistics and operations as it scales up.

Carrigan's pride in being the New Orleans startup that caught the attention of a major American brand was palatable over the phone. He said it shows the city is gaining attention as an entrepreneurial hotbed.

"It just goes to show you, New Orleans over the past five to 10 years is a drastically different place than it was before," Carrigan said.



8.18.15

Louisiana Gains Top Grade In National Small Business Survey

Thumbtack.com's annual rankings based on perceptions of local business owners in the states

BATON ROUGE, La. — Today, Thumbtack.com gave Louisiana a grade of A in its 2015 report card on small business friendliness, ranking the state No. 4 in the U.S. for its supportive small business environment. Louisiana earned an A in eight specific categories of the state's small business climate and a grade of B in three other categories.

The grades are part of an annual survey of small businesses through the United States conducted by Thumbtack in conjunction with the Kauffman Foundation. In addition to the top grade Louisiana received for small business friendliness, other ratings for the state include A grades for ease of starting a small business; regulatory friendliness; friendliness of health and safety regulations; friendliness of employment, labor and hiring regulations; friendliness of licensing regulations; friendliness of tax code; and friendliness of environmental regulations. Louisiana scored a B for ease of hiring a new employee; friendliness of zoning regulations; and training and networking programs.

Gov. Bobby Jindal said, "Small businesses are vital to the Louisiana economy and important contributors to the overall well-being of communities throughout Louisiana. We place great importance on helping our small businesses to grow and succeed, and since 2008 we have put in place a broad range of programs and services to make that happen. We are gratified to see those efforts recognized in the Thumbtack.com rankings."

Nearly 18,000 small business owners responded to the nationwide survey. The study asked respondents to rate their state and city governments across a broad range of policy factors. Thumbtack.com then evaluated states and cities against one another in the category metrics.

"Small business owners on Thumbtack have consistently told us that they welcome support from their governments but are frequently frustrated by unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles," Thumbtack.com Chief Economist Jon Lieber said. "In Louisiana, we've heard the state does a great job with entrepreneur-friendly regulations, and this year they saw a huge improvement in the quality of outreach from the state government."

Complete survey results may be found online at Thumbtack.com/survey.

Louisiana Economic Development provides a variety of programs and services throughout the state to support the growth and success of small businesses. Workforce development programs, one-on-one business consulting to entrepreneurs, specialized resources for veteran-owned, women-owned and minority-owned businesses and other forms of assistance are available to small businesses throughout Louisiana. For more information about LED resources for small businesses, visit OpportunityLouisiana.com/SmallBusiness.

Louisiana has ranked among the Top 5 states in the Thumbtack.com survey for three of the past four years. The state now places higher in all national business climate rankings than it ever did prior to 2008. In five national business climate rankings – those published by *Area Development*, *Business Facilities*, *Chief Executive*, *Site Selection* and international location marketing firm DCI – Louisiana now ranks among the Top 10 states in the U.S. *Site Selection* named LED the best-performing state economic development agency in the nation in 2011 and No. 2 in the nation in 2015, and Pollina Corporate Real Estate ranked LED tied for the best-performing state economic development agency in the nation in 2013.

About Thumbtack

Thumbtack.com is a technology-based marketplace that connects millions of Americans to experienced local professionals to help them accomplish personal projects. More than 200,000 small business professionals actively use Thumbtack each quarter, across nearly a thousand categories, and Thumbtack professionals help customers with more than 5 million projects annually. Founded in 2009 and headquartered in San Francisco, Thumbtack has raised a total of \$150 million from Sequoia Capital, Tiger Global Management, Javelin Investment Partners, and Google Capital. For more information, visit Thumbtack.com.

Kenner named one of safest places to live in Louisiana, website says



PHOTOS

KENNER, La. —The city of Kenner was recently recognized as one of the safest cities in Louisiana, according to one website.

Only In Your State compiled the list of the 11 safest places to live in Louisiana last week. The website measured safety through statistics on crime reports for 2013 from the FBI and considered places with populations over 2,000.

"Considering that Kenner is nearly five times larger than the next largest city on the list, it's quite a testament to the dedication and hard work of the city's police officers," Mayor Michael Yenni said.

According to the website, Kenner recorded 2.88 violent crimes per every 1,000 residents. The FBI's violent crimes report includes murder, nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Kenner has nearly 67,000 residents and the largest Louisiana city to make the list. The other cities on the list range between 2,000 and approximately 14,000 residents.

Other cities in the New Orleans metropolitan area that made the list included Harahan and Mandeville. Outside the New Orleans area, Breaux Bridge, Haughton and Berwick made the list.

More information about the list can be found on its [website](#).



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QUICK HITS

Analyzing the week's top news and what you can expect to happen next

What happened: St. Tammany Parish officials ordered Helis Oil & Gas Co. to stop construction on a drilling site east of La. 1088. The order came after a state judge's ruling that allows the parish to play out its appeal from a previous lawsuit against the drilling.

What's next: It's a rare victory for opponents of the controversial oil well, and there are likely to be more legal maneuvers as the project moves forward. Helis had begun improvements to the road that leads to the site and construction on the drilling pad where it plans to drill its exploratory vertical well. The company needs another permit from the Army Corps of Engineers if it decides to pursue a production well there.

What happened: A Port of New Orleans committee approved a \$45,000 contract with WWL-TV for a proposed television promotional campaign to mark the 10-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina.

What's next: The 30-second commercial would be filmed on port property, produced by the TV station and aired during newscasts beginning in mid-August. It would be part of the station's marketing campaign to attract business to New Orleans.

What happened: New Orleans educator incubator 4.0 Schools took over programming for Education Entrepreneurs, which organizes pitch events and hackathons for early-stage education businesses.

What's next: 4.0 Schools will partner with TechStars to support Startup Weekend EDU events in the U.S., and entrepreneurs emerging from the events will be able to use the groups' accelerator programs as a pathway to build their businesses.

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CORRECTION

The July 10 Dining Out column misidentified the chef at Amici. Frank Timphony is chef de cuisine.



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