

# SILICON BAYOU NEWS



## [First NBC Bank Backs Second Annual JEDCO Challenge](#)

[Julia Ballard](#) | January 24, 2014 | [Comments \(0\)](#)



[Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission](#) (JEDCO) has announced its collaboration with First NBC Bank for the second annual [JEDCO Challenge](#), a pitch competition showcasing the brightest entrepreneurs living and working in Jefferson Parish with unique ideas that have the high potential to grow and positively impact the area. The bank is now the presenting sponsor, donating \$10,000

to the winners of the challenge.

“It is a priority of First NBC Bank to positively impact communities where we do business,” says Ashton J. Ryan Jr., President and CEO of First NBC Bank. “The entrepreneurial spirit has always played a major role in thriving economies and we see that infusion of new ideas and products taking hold throughout Jefferson Parish and the remainder of the River Region. Through the JEDCO Challenge, we are furthering our role within the entrepreneurial community and finding new ways to engage and assist companies as they journey toward growth and sustainability. This is a wonderful partnership and we are proud to be a part of this event,” added Ryan.

The Challenge will be held during New Orleans Entrepreneur Week on March 25th, 2014. The application is now open [online](#) and will close on February 7th, 2014.

“The goal is really to engage with a lot of the entrepreneurs that live and work in Jefferson Parish and to provide them with a platform to promote their businesses,” said Kelsey Scram from JEDCO. “It’s also an opportunity for our business leaders and investors to see what kind of new talent we have in our community.” It’s about increasing the economic activity in the community through entrepreneurship, Scram continued.

Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Must live, work or have a strong presence in Jefferson Parish
- Must generate less than \$1 million in revenue
- Must have less than 10 employees
- Must be a for-profit company

“We are honored to be working with First BNC Bank to elevate opportunities for our entrepreneurs,” said Jerry Bologna, executive director of JEDCO. “First NBC Bank has a long history in Jefferson Parish and has proven to be a major asset to our entire region. With a background for assisting small businesses as they work to grow and find success locally, First NBC Bank is the perfect presenting sponsor.

JEDCO has also announced a new educational seminar series for small businesses and startups. It’s called Grow with JEDCO, which will focus in on a number of different topics. [Click here](#) for more information.



PRESS RELEASE  
January 24, 2014

## **First NBC Bank signs on as presenting sponsor of JEDCO Challenge** *Offers \$10,000 towards winning pitch prize package*

(Avondale, La) -- The Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission ([JEDCO](#)), in partnership with [the Idea Village](#) and [the Jefferson Chamber](#), is pleased to announce a new collaboration to improve the second annual [JEDCO Challenge](#). [First NBC Bank](#) recently chose to sign on to the competition as the presenting sponsor, offering \$10,000 to the winning pitch.

Held during [New Orleans Entrepreneur Week](#) (NOEW), an event spearheaded by the Idea Village, the JEDCO Challenge is a [Jefferson Parish](#)-based pitch competition for local entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs will be judged on a live seven-minute pitch and a business plan. The winning pitch will receive a prize package of capital and in-kind professional business services. To date, that prize package has reached a value of over \$35,000 and it is still growing.

First NBC Bank has been a champion of entrepreneurship since its inception in May 2006. Founded on the principles of building long-term relationships, responsiveness to customers and high quality service, First NBC Bank has played a significant role in the continuous improvement of communities throughout the region and the state. The local institution has been applauded for providing financial assistance to small businesses still recovering from Hurricane Katrina, as well as supplying capital to startups as they open their doors within our community.

"We are honored to be working with First NBC Bank to elevate opportunities for our entrepreneurs," says Jerry Bologna, executive director of JEDCO. "First NBC Bank has a long history in Jefferson Parish and has proven to be a major asset to our entire region. With a background for assisting small businesses as they work to grow and find success locally, First NBC Bank is the perfect presenting sponsor for the JEDCO Challenge."

"It is a priority of First NBC Bank to positively impact communities where we do business," says Ashton J. Ryan Jr., President and CEO of First NBC Bank. "The entrepreneurial spirit has always played a major role in thriving economies and we see that infusion of new ideas and products taking hold throughout

Jefferson Parish and the remainder of the River Region. Through the JEDCO Challenge, we are furthering our role within the entrepreneurial community and finding new ways to engage and assist companies as they journey toward growth and sustainability. This is a wonderful partnership and we are proud to be a part of this event," added Ryan.

JEDCO and First NBC Bank are still accepting applications for the 2014 JEDCO Challenge. They are looking for entrepreneurs with unique ideas that have the high potential to grow and positively impact Jefferson Parish. Entrepreneurs are urged to apply for the challenge on JEDCO's website.

They must meet the following criteria to be eligible:

- Must live, work or have a strong presence in Jefferson Parish
- Must generate less than \$1 million in revenue
- Must have fewer than 10 employees
- Must be a for-profit company

The deadline to apply is **February 7<sup>th</sup>**. Applicants will be narrowed down through a rigorous review process. Finalists will be chosen at the end of February with one month for pitch preparation and business plan assistance.

The entrepreneur challenge will be held **March 25<sup>th</sup>** at 2:00 at [Southport Hall](#) during New Orleans Entrepreneur Week. The culmination of the Idea Village's annual Entrepreneur Season, NOEW has become the premiere showcase event for the New Orleans entrepreneurial ecosystem. NOEW 2014 is expected to engage 5,000+ of the nation's most innovative business leaders, financiers, entrepreneurs and students.

This event would not be possible without assistance from our Jefferson Parish businesses and organizations. We would like to thank the following for their sponsorship of the event: [Jefferson Chamber of Commerce](#), [Cordina New Orleans Cocktails](#), [Baker Donelson](#), [Compucast Web Design](#), [Cox 4](#), [MMI Culinary Services](#), [Gambel Communications](#), [Ardyn Thriffily and Associates](#) and [A Journey to Success](#).

We are still accepting additional donations of in-kind services and money to grow the JEDCO Challenge prize package. Click [here](#) for details.

The deadline to apply for the JEDCO Challenge is **February 7<sup>th</sup>**. Visit [JEDCO's website](#) for **additional information** or click [here](#) to apply.

###

**About JEDCO:** The Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) is an independent, yet complementary arm of Jefferson Parish government with the main objective of attracting, growing and creating new business in our area. JEDCO's mission is to proactively influence the economy through the retention and creation of quality jobs, entrepreneurship and investment in Jefferson Parish.

**About First NBC Bank:** First NBC Bank received a charter to begin operations from the Louisiana Office of Financial Institutions in May 2006. Through overwhelming support from the local community, the Bank's initial capital footings exceeded \$60 million, which set a record for the largest initial capital raised by a Louisiana chartered institution. There are 31 banking offices on the South and North Shores of the

Greater New Orleans metropolitan area. First NBC Bank has been selected as one of the Best Places to Work six times in a row *New Orleans CityBusiness*.

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[www.facebook.com/JeffersonParishEconomicDevelopment](https://www.facebook.com/JeffersonParishEconomicDevelopment)





PRESS RELEASE  
January 16, 2014

## **JEDCO Launches Education Series for Small Businesses and Startups**

### ***First seminar scheduled for end of January***

(Avondale, La) - The [Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission \(JEDCO\)](#), in conjunction with the [Business Innovation Center at Churchill](#), is pleased to announce the launch of a new educational seminar series for small businesses and startup companies. The program, called Grow with JEDCO, offers over a dozen events to help our companies grow and find success locally.

Throughout 2014, Grow with JEDCO will provide monthly opportunities for small business owners to connect with business leaders and experts in business growth. JEDCO has scheduled 15 free seminars that provide tools and information to move a small business to the next level of development. The seminars will concentrate on a number of different topics, including:

- Human Resources
- Operational Management
- Sales and Marketing Strategies
- Business Development
- Financial Management
- Business Financing
- Turnaround Strategies
- Legal Services

"The Grow with JEDCO series provides a unique opportunity for small business owners to experience the vast amount of resources available to them in Jefferson Parish," says JEDCO Executive Director Jerry Bologna. "Our small business base is really the backbone of our economic community and we want to ensure that we provide those business owners with every opportunity to grow, find success and connect with the right people who can help them do that. "

The first Grow with JEDCO seminar, called "The Challenge for Business Startups: Bringing Your Business Idea to Life," will highlight the ability to turn a good idea into a business opportunity. [Simmons & White](#) consultant Clayton White will walk attendees through the challenges they'll face and how to overcome them as they start and grow their businesses locally.

"Simmons & White is excited to play a role in this new program," says Clayton White, owner of Simmons & White, a consulting firm that assists early stage ventures. "We've always valued a strong relationship with JEDCO and look forward to this partnership. We will educate our business owners, but we will also give them the chance to walk away with a new set of contacts and an appreciation for the many resources available to them right here in their own community."

The event will be held **January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from 8:00-9:30 AM at the JEDCO Conference Center (701A Churchill Parkway in Avondale)**. The event is free and open to the public. If you're interested in registering for the event, please click [here](#) or visit the JEDCO website at [www.jedco.org](http://www.jedco.org). Questions can be directed to Alan Allgood at (504) 875-3928.

Please visit [JEDCO's Business Workshops](#) page for updates on upcoming Grow with JEDCO seminars.

###

**About JEDCO:** The Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) is an independent, yet complementary arm of Jefferson Parish government with the main objective of attracting, growing and creating new business in our area. JEDCO's mission is to proactively influence the economy through the retention and creation of quality jobs, entrepreneurship and investment in Jefferson Parish.

**About the Business Innovation Center at Churchill:** The Business Innovation Center at Churchill provides a place to develop up-and-coming businesses. Not only can startups find office space at below-market rent, but the incubator program is designed to connect business innovators, market experts and capital providers to transform business ideas into viable business ventures. The Business Innovation Center at Churchill provides an atmosphere in which startup businesses can survive and prosper.

**Simmons & White:** A local consulting firm, Simmons & White partners with high-potential companies to navigate challenges and opportunities. Whether you are troubleshooting management issues, seeking best practices, or exploring new ways to grow, our team of experts can help. Simmons & White provides a comprehensive range of services in the areas of financial management, business process improvement, sales and marketing, access to capital, policies and procedures, risk management, strategy and technology.

**About Clayton White:** Clayton White has over 25 years of experience working with

startup and early-stage companies. His background includes organizational structure, mergers and acquisitions, financial management and controls, capital structure, and corporate governance. He has taken companies through the venture capital process and is currently involved in company valuations, due diligence, planning, capitalization, and exit strategies. Mr. White is a member and organizer of the [South Coast Angel Fund](#). The South Coast Angel Fund is a member-managed angel capital fund designed to utilize the capital, resources, and expertise of its members to profit from its investments in entrepreneurial, early-stage companies in Louisiana. Mr. White has a B.S. in Physics, an MBA, and a Juris Doctor. He is a member of the Louisiana and Alabama Bar. He sits on the boards of several companies, non-profits, and community organizations. Learn more about Simmons & White at <http://www.simmonswhite.com/>

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# Grow with JEDCO presents

## The Challenge for Business Startups: Bringing Your Business Idea to Life

### DOES YOUR BUSINESS HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?

**A business is more than an idea.** That's the philosophy behind the first small business seminar in the Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission's educational business series, **Grow with JEDCO**.

#### Ask the tough questions! Does your business:

- ➔ Add value?
- ➔ Have a specific target market?
- ➔ Have the ability to maintain customer relations?

Clayton White, of Simmons & White and the South Coast Angel Fund, will walk you through the **challenges** you'll face and how to **overcome** them as you start and grow your business.

**Grow with JEDCO** is a new educational series for small businesses and entrepreneurs. Throughout the year, JEDCO will host over a dozen events to help you grow and find success locally.

**JANUARY 29, 2014**

8:00 AM - 9:30 AM

JEDCO Conference Center

701 A Churchill Parkway

Avondale, La 70094

Register for this **FREE** event at  
[www.jedco.org](http://www.jedco.org) or call  
(504) 875-3908.



# THE ADVOCATE

## Education series for start-ups in Jefferson, and other community news

Sun, 19 Jan 2014

[0 Comments](#)

The Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission will hold an educational seminar for small businesses and startups, beginning in late January.

The program, called “Grow with JEDCO,” will offer 15 free events in 2014 to help local companies grow successfully.

The seminars will cover topics such as human resources, operational management, sales and marketing, business development and financial management.

The series will be developed in conjunction with the Business Innovation Center at Churchill.

The first event, “The Challenge for Start-ups: Bringing Your Business Idea to Life,” will be held from 8 to 9:30 a.m. Jan. 29 at the JEDCO conference center, 701 Churchill Parkway, Avondale. It will be led by business consultant Clayton White.

For more information, visit the JEDCO website at [www.jedco.org](http://www.jedco.org) or contact Alan Allgood at (504) 875-3928.



# Waggaman couple wins front-yard makeover worth \$5,000

[Sandra Smith, Waggaman columnist](#) By [Sandra Smith, Waggaman columnist](#)  
on January 17, 2014 at 3:37 PM

Mattie and Neil Whitney of Waggaman are the winners of Waggaman Development Group's Fourth Annual Curb Appeal Contest, and they will receive a front yard makeover valued at \$5,000.

The Whitneys are longtime members of the S-1 Civic Group in Waggaman, and they were entered into the drawing after attending civic meetings throughout 2013.

Sharmon Romero was asked to pull the winning name for the raffle. Romero is the wife of Frank Romero, the pastor of First Baptist Church of Waggaman.

Mattie Whitney said she was shocked and very happy, because she and her husband had been discussing a front yard makeover project for about seven years.

Neil Whitney was so happy he began jumping up and down as it was announced that they had won. He said, "I was so happy when she pulled our names, I couldn't stop hugging the pastor's wife."

Sharmon Romero said "After I pulled their names, he hugged me so many times that you would have thought I gave them the money myself."

The next S-1 Civic Group meeting will be at 7 p.m. on Feb. 19 at Live Oak Manor Fire Station, 160 Modern Farms Road.

## **JEDCO**

Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) will offer 15 free seminars to the public on a variety of topics to assist new and small businesses to become more effective in multiple areas of business.

The program, "Grow with JEDCO," has scheduled "The Challenge for Business Startups: Bringing Your Business Idea to Life," the first in the series for Jan. 29. The event will be held at the JEDCO Conference Center, 701A Churchill Parkway. The session begins at 8 a.m. and ends at 9:30 a.m.

For more information or to register for the seminar, visit [www.jedco.org](http://www.jedco.org) or call Alan Allgood at 504.875.3928

## **Live Oak Manor**

Live Oak Manor Library will have a craft-making session on Feb. 1 from 11 a.m. to noon.

No registration is required, and all supplies are provided. This event is free and open to children ages 3-15. The craft will be woven paper hearts, just in time for Valentine's Day. The library is located at 125 Acadia Drive. For more information on library events, view the library's calendar page at [la.evanced.info/jefferson/lib/eventcalendar.asp?lib=13](http://la.evanced.info/jefferson/lib/eventcalendar.asp?lib=13).

*Sandra Smith is a Waggaman resident who writes about people and events of community interest in Waggaman and Avondale. She can be reached at [waggamannews@yahoo.com](mailto:waggamannews@yahoo.com) or 504.343.6916.*



PRESS RELEASE  
January 7, 2013

## **JEDCO launches second entrepreneur pitch competition** *Event to be held during New Orleans Entrepreneur Week*

(Avondale, La) - The [Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission \(JEDCO\)](#) is pleased to announce the launch of its [second annual pitch competition](#) for entrepreneurs living and working in Jefferson Parish. Held during [New Orleans Entrepreneur Week](#), an event spearheaded by [The Idea Village](#), the JEDCO Challenge will elevate opportunities for early-stage companies in the area.

The competition will be held on Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> in front of a panel of Jefferson Parish business leaders and an audience of their peers. Finalists will be judged on a seven-minute pitch and a business plan, which must be submitted in advance of the competition. The winning pitch will receive a business-boosting prize package of in-kind business services and direct capital to be used to help grow the company in Jefferson Parish. To date, the prize package totals nearly \$20,000 with plans to continue growing until the competition.

JEDCO is looking for entrepreneurs with unique ideas that have the high potential to grow and positively impact Jefferson Parish. Entrepreneurs are urged to apply for the challenge on JEDCO's website. They must meet the following criteria to be eligible:

- Must live, work or have a strong presence in Jefferson Parish
- Must generate less than \$1 million in revenue
- Must have less than 10 employees
- Must be a for-profit company

The application will be live on JEDCO's website for one month, starting January 7<sup>th</sup>. Applicants will be narrowed down through a rigorous review process. Finalists will be chosen at the end of February with one month for pitch preparation and business plan assistance.

"Entrepreneurs are the future of Jefferson Parish and we will do everything we can to best assist them as they grow," says JEDCO Executive Director Jerry Bologna. "This entrepreneur challenge provides us with a platform to better connect with the future leaders of our Jefferson Parish business community. It is exciting for JEDCO to play a role in helping these companies find success in

Jefferson Parish and we look forward to providing a continuous support system in the future."

In 2013, the pitch competition was born out of a challenge posed by Jefferson Parish start-up, [Cordina New Orleans Cocktails](#). The company, which creates on-the-go adult drinks, asked JEDCO to host a pitch competition for local entrepreneurs. Not only did the event showcase the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Jefferson Parish, but it also connected our up-and-comers with today's business leaders through direct capital, business resources and mentorship.

In the competition's first year, four finalists competed in front of an audience of more than 115 people. With sponsorships from more than a dozen local companies, the 2013 winner, Billy Bosch of [Be Well Nutrition, Inc.](#), walked away from the competition with more than \$50,000 in direct capital and in-kind services. Billy used the prize package to help launch two flavors of the company's new health drink, ICONIC.

The entrepreneur challenge will be held during New Orleans Entrepreneur Week for the second year in a row. The culmination of the Idea Village's annual Entrepreneur Season, NOEW has become the premiere showcase event for the New Orleans entrepreneurial ecosystem. NOEW 2014 is expected to engage 5,000+ of the nation's most innovative business leaders, financiers, entrepreneurs and students.

This event would not be possible without assistance from our Jefferson Parish businesses and organizations. We would like to thank the following for their sponsorship of the event: [Jefferson Chamber of Commerce](#), Cordina New Orleans Cocktails, [MMI Culinary Services](#), [Gambel Communications](#), [Ardyn Thriffily and Associates](#) and [A Journey to Success](#). We are still accepting additional donations of in-kind services and money to grow the JEDCO Challenge prize package. Click [here](#) for details.

The deadline to apply for the JEDCO Challenge is February 7<sup>th</sup>. Visit JEDCO's website for [additional information](#) or click [here](#) to apply.

###

**About JEDCO:** JEDCO is an independent, yet complementary arm of Jefferson Parish government with the main objective of attracting, growing and creating new business in our area. JEDCO's mission is to proactively influence the economy through the retention and creation of quality jobs, entrepreneurship and investment in Jefferson Parish.

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# JEDCO Launches Second Annual Pitch Competition for Jefferson Parish Startups



Billy Bosch of Be Well Nutrition, Inc. walked away from the entrepreneur competition in 2013 with a prize package valued at more than \$50,000 in direct capital and in-kind services.

Do you have a big idea you've been dying to share? Are you the owner of an early-stage startup in need of funding or business services? The Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) wants you!

JEDCO, in partnership with the Jefferson Chamber and Idea Village, recently announced plans to hold its second annual pitch competition for entrepreneurs living and working in Jefferson Parish. The competition began after Elmwood business, Cordina New Orleans Cocktails, issued a challenge to host an event for entrepreneurs in 2013. The pitch competition was so successful last year, JEDCO decided to host it again.

Held during New Orleans Entrepreneur Week, a startup celebration spearheaded by the Idea Village, the JEDCO Challenge offers big opportunities for early-stage companies in the area. It provides a platform for entrepreneurs to pitch their business ideas in front of a panel of Jefferson Parish business leaders.

Finalists will be judged on a seven-minute pitch and a business plan, which must be submitted in advance of the competition. The winning pitch receives a prize package of in-kind services and capital to help grow the company in Jefferson. At the beginning of January, the prize package was worth more than \$20,000

and growing. Sponsors include Gambel Communications, the Jefferson Chamber, MMI Culinary Services, Cordina New Orleans Cocktails, Baker Donelson, Ardyn Thriffily and Associates, a Journey to Success and CompuCast Web Media.

JEDCO is looking for entrepreneurs with unique ideas that have the high potential to grow and positively impact Jefferson Parish. They must meet the following criteria to be eligible:

- Must live, work or have a strong presence (target market) in Jefferson Parish
- Must generate less than \$1 million in revenue
- Must have fewer than 10 employees
- Must be a for-profit company

Applicants will be narrowed down through a rigorous review process. Finalists will be chosen at the end of February with one month for pitch preparation and business plan assistance. The deadline to apply is February 7th. Visit JEDCO's website at [www.jedco.org](http://www.jedco.org) for details and to apply. If you have questions, call Kelsey Scram at (504) 875-3927 or email her at [kscram@jedco.org](mailto:kscram@jedco.org).



# JEDCO is taking applications for second edition of its Jefferson Parish entrepreneur challenge



Be Well Nutrition founder Billy Bosch with his health drink ICONIC, was the winner of the first Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission business pitch contest in 2013. JEDCO now is taking applications for the second annual installment of the event. *(Kathleen Flynn, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune)*

[Print](#)



By [Mark Waller, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune](#)

Email the author | [Follow on Twitter](#)

on January 09, 2014 at 4:53 PM

The **Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission** is taking applications for its second annual **business idea competition**, held in conjunction with New Orleans Entrepreneur Week in March and awarding at least \$20,000 in cash and donated professional services to startups with winning pitches. JEDCO continues gathering donations to add to the prize package.

The economic development group opened applications this week and will continue **accepting entrants online** until Feb 7. By the end of February, it will name finalists who then will get one month to develop written business plans to submit as part of the contest and in-person, seven-minute presentations to deliver before a panel of judges on March 25 during Entrepreneur Week, which is organized by **The Idea Village** in New Orleans. The JEDCO contest will take place in Jefferson Parish in a venue yet to be named.

Requirements for admission are that the entrepreneurs must live, work or have strong presences in Jefferson Parish, that they operate for-profit companies, generate less than \$1 million in revenue and employ fewer than 10 people.

**Last year**, four finalists performed in front of judges and an audience of 115 people at the Drago's restaurant Empire Room in Fat City. The winner, Be Well Nutrition, maker of the ICONIC health drink, received \$50,000 worth of assistance.

An announcement from JEDCO said the inaugural event in 2013 was prompted by a challenge from **Cordina New Orleans Cocktails**, which makes go-pouches of alcoholic drinks, is based in Jefferson Parish and is one of the New Orleans area's entrepreneurship success stories of recent years. The event, JEDCO said, showcased Jefferson startups and "connected our up-and-comers with today's business leaders through direct capital, business resources and mentorship."

## [JEDCO Launches Pitch Competition to Engage Local Entrepreneurs](#)

[Julia Ballard](#) | January 7, 2014 | [0 Comments](#)



[Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission](#) (JEDCO) has announced they have opened applications for the second ever [JEDCO Challenge](#), a pitch competition showcasing the brightest entrepreneurs living and working in Jefferson Parish with unique ideas that have the high potential to grow and positively impact the area. The Challenge will be held during New Orleans Entrepreneur Week on March 25th, 2014. The application is now open [online](#).

“The goal is really to engage with a lot of the entrepreneurs that live and work in Jefferson Parish and to provide them with a platform to promote their businesses,” said Kelsey Scram from JEDCO. “It’s also an opportunity for our business leaders and investors to see what kind of new talent we have in our community.” It’s about increasing the economic activity in the community through entrepreneurship, Scram continued.

Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Must live, work or have a strong presence in Jefferson Parish
- Must generate less than \$1 million in revenue
- Must have less than 10 employees
- Must be a for-profit company

“Entrepreneurs are the future of Jefferson Parish and we will do everything we can to best assist them as they grow,” says JEDCO Executive Director Jerry Bologna. “This entrepreneur challenge provides us with a platform to better connect with the future leaders of our Jefferson Parish business community. It is exciting for JEDCO to play a role in helping these companies find success in Jefferson Parish and we look forward to providing a continuous support system in the future.”

Applications are due by February 7th, 2014. Finalists will be chosen at the end of February, leaving them with an additional month for pitch preparation and business plan assistance. They will then have a chance to pitch in front of a panel of Jefferson Parish business leaders for seven minutes each.



Scram also mentioned the excitement brewing this year after the tremendous success the first annual competition was. Last year’s competition was created out of a challenge designed by [Cordina New Orleans Cocktails](#), dubbed the Cordina Challenge. The winner was Billy Bosch of [Be Well Nutrition](#), who received over \$50,000 in capital and in-kind services.

Information about criteria, event sponsorship and more is available [here](#).





# Bridge City gun club members hope 65-year tradition isn't over



By [Sandra Smith, Waggaman columnist](#)

on January 13, 2014 at 7:13 AM, updated January 13, 2014 at 7:15 AM

Jay Buras of Waggaman is among the members of [South Louisiana Gun Club](#) in Bridge City who are hoping that the year 2013 will not be the end of an era for the club that has been in existence for 65 years.

Shortly after the completion of the Huey P. Long Bridge, club president Fred Graff was notified that the gun club would be losing their lease on the land because the owners plan to develop it.

Buras said, "Members go to the club as a family outing, to shoot skeet or take hunter safety courses. You never know who you are shooting next to – people from every walk of life. And over the years, there has never been any trouble. It's a hidden treasure so close to home."

Buras said, "Everyone in the club helps each other."

Buras said he appreciated learning from Sammy Centanni, a longtime member with a lot of patience who helped him the most.

Buras recalls that among the funniest memories at the club was a day when they were teaching a woman how to shoot, and she simply was not grasping the concept. She said "What if I close one eye?" Buras said, "It was going so badly, I told her she might as well close both eyes."

Graff said that some of the best competitive clay shooters have come through the club. Paul Jambrone of Covington is just one example. Graff said "Paul Jambrone is barely 30 years old and holds 14 titles, including world champion."

Graff also said there have been lots of well-known people in the club over the years. Harry Lee joined the club before he became the sheriff in Jefferson Parish.

Perhaps the most important thing for many members is the friendships they have gained through the club. Members share common interests – accuracy in shooting and responsible gun ownership. Graff said as a result of this, people have formed lifelong friendships with others they have met at the club.

The club has approximately 125 members who come from many cities, and Graff is working to find a new location and negotiate a reasonably priced lease that would allow the club to continue.

## JEDCO

The Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) announces that the JEDCO Entrepreneur Challenge is scheduled for March 25.

The event gives area entrepreneurs a chance to showcase their early stage ventures. Entrepreneurs who are selected will pitch their business to the business community during Idea Village's New Orleans Entrepreneur

Week. The winner will be awarded a prize package to assist in boosting business with services and capital. At this time, the package is valued over \$18,000 and is climbing.

The criteria to compete includes entrepreneurs must live and work or have a strong business presence in Jefferson Parish while generating up to \$1 million in annual revenue. Entrepreneurs must employ 10 or less employees and function as a for profit company.

The deadline to apply for the competition is Feb. 7. To apply, visit the JEDCO website: at [www.jedco.org/jedco-entrepreneur-challenge-application/](http://www.jedco.org/jedco-entrepreneur-challenge-application/).

*Sandra Smith is a Waggaman resident who writes about people and events of community interest. She can be reached at [waggamannews@yahoo.com](mailto:waggamannews@yahoo.com) or 504.343.6916.*



# Idea Village expecting larger crowd, more new businesses in upcoming edition of New Orleans Entrepreneur Week



The Idea Village CEO Tim Williamson speaks during a gathering on Fulton Street in New Orleans on Thursday, Jan. 23, 2014, about the upcoming lineup for the New Orleans Entrepreneur Week business festival. (Mark Waller, NOLA.com | *The Times-Picayune*)

[Print](#)



By [Mark Waller, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune](#)

Email the author | [Follow on Twitter](#)

on January 24, 2014 at 7:30 AM, updated January 24, 2014 at 7:35 AM

**New Orleans Entrepreneur Week** is poised to hit 5,000 participants for its 6th installment in March, surpassing the 2013 edition of the business festival by 2,000 people. Leaders of **The Idea Village** booster group for startups, which produces the event, said it will include 56 individual events, among them 16 competitions where 75 upstart enterprises will vie for infusions of capital to advance their projects.

Unfolding at Gallier Hall, on Fulton Street and other venues around the New Orleans area on March 22-28, Entrepreneur Week will include several themed business pitch competitions presented in conjunction with a range of organizations.

Among those are the Greater New Orleans Foundation's **Water Challenge** for entrepreneurs addressing water management issues, the **Education Challenge** by the 4.0 Schools incubator, the Urban League of Greater New Orleans **Women in Business Challenge**, the Downtown Development District's **Arts-Based Business Pitch**, the semi-finals of **Tulane University's Business Model Competition**, the Jefferson Economic Development Commission's **Jefferson Parish Entrepreneur Challenge** and the Salesforce-Silverline Challenge produced by two cloud computing companies.

This year one of the city's largest and highest-profile industries, tourism, which the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics credits for about 79,000 jobs in the metropolitan area, will join the Entrepreneur Week lineup with a Tourism Hackathon sponsored by the New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation and aiming to channel the talents of software developers into a cram session producing mobile applications to benefit visitors. The process is modeled after a **hackathon that took place before the Super Bowl** in New Orleans in 2013.

Youthful entrepreneurs will receive additional attention during the week, with Junior Achievement's Junior Idea, Google for Education and the Brees Dream Foundation presenting the **Trust Your Crazy Ideas Challenge** for high school business teams and the **inNOLAvation** entrepreneurship group for minorities presenting a High School Entrepreneur Challenge.

The 4.0 Schools education startup incubator also aims to launch an international competition for new designs for schools and usher ideas from that process into the formation of functioning schools to open in New Orleans in 2015.



The week culminates with a trio of broad-based pitch contests produced directly by The Idea Village: the **Coulter IDEApitch**, which exposes entrepreneurs to national venture capitalists, the **Power Pitch** for slightly less developed companies seeking angel investors and **The Big Idea**, which raises seed money for early stage companies partly by inviting thousands of attendees to vote for their favorite startups with \$25 donations. Organizers call it the world's largest crowd-funded pitch contest.

The top three vote getters in The Big Idea proceed to perform for a grand prize, which last year was \$50,000, in a pep rally atmosphere before a panel of dignitaries as judges.

"It's a chance for the broader community to engage and see the entrepreneurial movement," said Tim Williamson, chief executive officer of The Idea Village, about The Big Idea.

Over all of the events, the number of participating companies is up 28 percent from last year.

Idea Village leaders, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu and leaders of participating organizations gathered on Fulton Street Thursday to trumpet the latest lineup, which also will include speakers and other event details yet to be announced.

David Darragh, chief executive officer of the Reily Foods Company who serves as chairman of the board of directors for The Idea Village, a non-profit organization, urged listeners to help the event top 5,000 participants.

"Are you on board?" Darragh asked. "Are you ready to take this onward?"

"It feels a little bit like Jazzfest, because we're opening up new stages," Williamson said.

"The world is saying things about us that they've never said," Landrieu said, referring to a steady stream of media accolades in recent years for entrepreneurship in New Orleans. "A few short years ago, we were 17 feet under water and nobody could spell entrepreneurship in New Orleans."

# New Orleans CITY BUSINESS

## Company builds on success of Crawfish Monica

*POSTED: 09:56 AM Tuesday, December 31, 2013*

*BY: [Jessica Gonzalez, Reporter](#)*

Since 1981, Kajun Kettle Foods Inc. owners Monica Davidson-Hilzem and Pierre “Pete” Hilzem have grown their food manufacturing business from their Kenner kitchen table to an 86,000-square-foot production facility in Elmwood.



The staff and leadership of Kajun Kettle Foods Inc. is best known for Crawfish Monica, the longtime staple of the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. (Photo by Ashley Merlin)

Their customers include grocery stores, restaurants and festivals in Louisiana and five states.

Their best-known product: Crawfish Monica, the spicy cream sauce and pasta dish that has

been a longtime staple of the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival.

The business was recently named the 2013 Small Business of the Year by the Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission for its longevity and the \$1.8 million in charitable food donations it has given to organizations.

Kajun Kettle Foods’ founders recently discussed their growth and how catering Jazz Fest has prepared them to be the official Emergency Feeder for the State of Louisiana.

**Q: You seem to have large presence for a company with 34 employees.**

Pete: We’ve learned how to do more with fewer employees. We try not to be top heavy; it kills on overhead. We’ve gone through several business cycles, years of growth and years of no growth, and it’s been an interesting road... You have to learn to do as much as you can with what you’ve got or you get killed.

**Monica:** Our production facility is around 86,000 square feet... a lot of equipment was already here, so we've been able to become more mechanized than before. We have a lot more room to do things like conveyer belt systems... We consider ourselves a big business because we have a lot of people to look after to make sure we're serving their needs.

**CB:** Most people are familiar with festival presence, but besides that what other markets have you ventured into over the years?

**Monica:** We've grown a whole lot, and we have a lot more to do... We're going into newstates, with new brokers and new distributors, and are doing more retail. We also do emergency feeding for the state after storms and emergency situations.



**CB:** How'd you get involved with emergency feeding? Is it hard to juggle that with the company's other client responsibilities?

**Pete:** That was kind of what we were involved in doing around the storm (Hurricane Katrina)... Because of what we know from Jazz Fest, and our experience with large-scale catering, we know how to set up and create systems to feed people where not much infrastructure exists. We could get a call at 9 p.m. tonight and have to get to work. And we do get paid for that.

**Monica:** One of the biggest experiments we had was after the BP oil spill when we put in a whole catering unit for responders and clean-up crews. We catered around for around 400 people, seven days a week, from 4:30 a.m. to 2 a.m. for nine months. (Emergency feeding) affects business in unpredictable ways sometimes... It ebbs and flows and other sides of the business hinge around that.

**CB:** JEDCO reports that you experienced 20 percent sales growth last year? How was this achieved?

**Monica:** Our client base we were able to work with grew quite a bit, pulled us with them. We've been successful enough with them on a local scale, and when they grew regionally we grew with them. We're even negotiating a fleet-wide move with one brand and that would put us into all the stores they own, over 900 grocery stores.

We also do a lot of business with chain restaurants and some of them have grown a huge amount, at least 20 percent.

**Pete:** (Growing the retail sector) is a long term process... You can't just throw products out there and hope it sells. It's easy to get it into stores and onto shelves but the hard thing is getting the products into the shopping baskets. We do a lot of food shows, and make calls to restaurant groups... that helps stimulate sales.

I think one of the great mysteries of life is how one grows a retail brand. It's so complex and so dependent on so many things. I don't understand it. I'm a chef. We do a lot of work on the hot side of grocery store, ready-made items, and that I understand.

**CB: You've been in business for 32 years so you're obviously doing something right. What advice can you give to newer businesses?**

**Monica:** When you get knocked down get back up. We're stubborn, so just hanging in there, and seeking advice from others in business is so important. Experiment and try new things. Don't be afraid to fail... It's about hanging in there.

We probably made 25 cents at our first year of Jazz Fest. We could've quit after that but we didn't and now it's a very big, nice piece of business we do. We never would have gotten there if we gave up after the first or second year because it wasn't as lucrative we thought it would be.

**Reporter Jessica Gonzalez can be reached at [jessica.gonzalez@nopg.com](mailto:jessica.gonzalez@nopg.com) or @Jess\_GonzalezCB**

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## West Bank growth hinges on Huey P., flood mitigation

POSTED: 03:19 PM Tuesday, December 3, 2013

BY: [John Breerwood, Contributing Writer](#)

TAGS: [Avondale shipyard](#), [commercial](#), [Elmwood](#), [Huey P. Long Bridge](#), [Jack Stumpf](#), [Jack Stumpf and Associates](#), [Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission](#), [Jerry Bologna](#), [real estate](#), [West Bank](#)  
[1](#)

**Editor's note:** The following report is part of the annual Real Estate Trends overview of commercial real estate in the New Orleans area. The full report is part of this week's issue of CityBusiness.



Jack Stumpf, president of Jack Stumpf and Associates, says rising flood insurance rates and wetlands mitigation hurdles remain hurdles to large-scale commercial development on the West Bank. (Photo by Ashley Merlin)

With the Huey P. Long Bridge expansion project complete, experts say the West Bank is positioned to accommodate large-scale industrial or commercial projects if developers can jump several key hurdles.

Jerry Bologna, executive director of the Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission, said the expanded bridge is already having a significant economic impact. He noted retailers in Elmwood on the East Bank have already seen “significant appreciable upticks in traffic counts.”

The West Bank also stands to benefit. Bologna said much of the open land at the foot of the bridge has the potential to tap into the same traffic that Elmwood has seen.

“The bridge completion positions the area west of the Harvey Canal to capture a lot of future growth,” he said. “Many West Bank property owners that have owned land in the proximity of the Huey P. Long Bridge are starting to position their properties to get them into commerce.”

Jack Stumpf, president of Jack Stumpf and Associates, is also optimistic about the area's future growth, particularly at the base of the newly expanded bridge.

“I've been getting calls about my property near there,” Stumpf said. “The Huey P. Long Bridge has been a big plus.”

Still, a number of challenges stand in the way of widespread commercial development. Stumpf said that flood insurance and wetlands issues are the biggest concerns for prospective developers. It cost about \$4,000 per acre

to address a wetlands mitigation issue seven years ago, and today that cost could run up as high as \$30,000 per acre, he said.

“If an acre is worth \$25,000 and you have to put another \$30,000 into it, then it does not become realistic to develop it,” Stumpf said. “The cost of land and improvements will be more than the value of the land after it is all done.”

Bologna added the uncertainty surrounding the Avondale Shipyard continues to weigh on the market. Huntington Ingalls Industries intends to close the facility when U.S. Navy contracts end late this year if it can't find alternate work. The shipyard now employs 1,500 down from a workforce that once surpassed 5,000.

The strong retail market on the West Bank could prompt future development, though Stumpf said large retail center developments are unlikely. He noted the cost of building such centers exceeds the return in investment and national retailers such as Family Dollar and CVS increasingly prefer to open in freestanding buildings.

Stumpf sees more opportunity in redeveloping currently vacant retail centers.

“You are going to see a reduction of large vacant spaces, so it is going to be difficult finding a vacant retail building on the West Bank right now,” Stumpf said.

He added demand for industrial and residential space is also high.

“There is a demand for apartments because occupancy is very high,” Stumpf said. “We have fewer apartments today than 10 years ago and there is much demand for industrial space for speculative industrial buildings or parks.”

JEDCO relocated its headquarters in 2011 to the Churchill Business and Technology Park in Avondale. Bologna said the move underscored the role the West Bank will have in the future of Jefferson Parish development.

“There is a lot of green space that is ripe for residential, commercial, or retail development,” he said. “If you are looking for that untapped space to build on, the West Bank is that last frontier.”•

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# Jennifer Van Vrancken Dwyer is named Jefferson Parish's new chief operating officer



[Print](#)



By [Adriane Quinlan, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune](#)

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on January 02, 2014 at 7:14 PM, updated January 03, 2014 at 9:55 AM

The new second-in-command of the **Jefferson Parish** administration has worked in government only since 2010. But she has risen quickly and proven herself to be a stable,

business-minded force capable of helming large projects and seeing them through, according to community leaders.

Jennifer Van Vrancken Dwyer was first appointed a chief administrative assistant for **John Young** was elected parish president in 2010. That came less than a year after Young's elected predecessor, Aaron Broussard, and two top aides were forced from office by a corruption scandal that later saw them plead guilty to criminal charges.

"We came in at a very difficult time, and we have worked for the past three years to restore the public confidence in parish government," Dwyer said Thursday. "It's exciting to be part of an administration that has worked to restore the public's confidence."

A lifelong parish resident, Dwyer, 42, has seen public trust in local government ebb and flow. Though she studied political science at Newcomb College, she had no intention of immediately stepping into public service. Instead, she headed to law school, earning a degree from Tulane in 1995 but opting not to practice law.

She was drawn to the news media, starting as an assistant at WWL television. She became an anchor and a reporter in Lake Charles by 1998 then moved to a similar role at a station in Memphis, Tenn.

It was from Memphis that Dwyer watched Hurricane Katrina tear through her hometown. To a news professional accustomed to heading into the center of the action to tell the story, the distance felt wrong.

"I decided, after Katrina, to come home because, really, there's no bigger story than your hometown drowning," Van Vrancken Dwyer said. "I couldn't imagine anything more significant."

Back in Metairie, Dwyer worked to help her family's wedding catering business get back on its feet. In the process, she grew closer to her family, Dwyer said.

In parish government, Young eventually **put her in charge of** five departments, including human resources, juvenile services and computer technology. At the time, Young noted her experience in both law and local business would be an asset to the role.

"I hope that I bring the diversity of some of the experiences I've had," Dwyer said.

In early 2012, Dwyer was **promoted to deputy chief operating officer**, after Richard Hart resigned under a cloud. She has worked closely with business leaders and local civic groups.

Executive Director Jerry Bologna of the Jefferson Economic Development Commission said Dwyer distinguished herself as a strong and effective advocate for economic development. "We always enjoy a quick turnaround whenever we request something from her," Bologna said. "She's played an active role in some of our most recent successes."

As the administration's liaison to the Jefferson Chamber of Commerce, Dwyer communicated issues in both directions between government and business. Perhaps her skill as a news anchor - explaining complex matters to busy listeners - was valuable here. Chamber President Todd Murphy said she distinguished herself translating between the two different sets of interests.

"She's a great communicator," Murphy said. "Very thorough. Very informative."

Ralph Brandt, 2013 president of the Civic League of East Jefferson, called her "no nonsense." When the homeowners group took an interest in business' move to install electronic billboards, Brandt remembered that Dwyer tracked the issue through multiple government departments.

"She would not be dissuaded by the fact that something wasn't her job," Brandt said. "Jennifer is a very present individual, who is no nonsense with her dealings to help make government work for the community."

As chief operating officer, Dwyer succeeds Chris Cox, who is **leaving the Young administration** to work for District Attorney Paul Connick Jr. Dwyer's current job will be filled by Jacque Molaison, a chief administrative assistant.

Asked what distinguishes her as a public servant, Dwyer swerved from the question. "I consider myself very hard working," Dwyer said. "I consider it just an honor to be part of the team."



PRESS RELEASE  
December 19, 2013

## **JEDCO Announces 2014 Board Chairman and Officers**

(Avondale, La) - The Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) would like to introduce the 2014 Board of Commissioners and Board Officers to the community. The 21 individuals who serve on the JEDCO Board represent area business organizations and parish leaders. They work closely with the JEDCO staff to achieve the organization's mission of attracting, retaining and expanding business in Jefferson Parish.

Greg Jordan takes to the Chairman's seat at the beginning of 2014, bringing with him 25 years of banking experience. Greg joined the JEDCO Board in March 2009. In 2013, he served as the Treasurer of the JEDCO Board and the Chairman of the JEDCO Finance Committee. The representative for the Jefferson Chamber of Commerce (East Bank), Greg is the Senior Vice President/Market Manager for J.P. Morgan Chase Bank. When Greg isn't working, he's engaged in 12 community and business organizations across the region. Greg received a *New Orleans CityBusiness* MoneyMakers Award for his role in the banking community in 2013.

The JEDCO Board of Commissioners welcomed Mayra Pineda to the organization in May of 2013. Mayra was nominated to the commission by the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. She is the Commissioner of Economic Development and Education at the Consulate of Honduras in New Orleans. She is also the owner and operator of Subway Sandwiches and Salads in Kenner. Mayra is the current president of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. She also serves as a member on a number of boards and associations throughout the region.

The Jefferson Parish President nominates one representative to serve on the JEDCO Board of Commissioners. The Parish Council nominates seven members and 13 board appointees represent local business organizations. Business representatives serve five years. Those board members nominated by the Parish Council and President serve for the duration of the nominator's term in office.

### **2014 JEDCO Board of Commissioners**

Greg Jordan - **Chairman**

### **Nominating Organization**

Jefferson Chamber of Commerce - East Bank

Paul Rivera - <b>Vice Chairman</b>	J.P. Marine Fisheries Advisory Board
Mike Rongey - <b>Treasurer</b>	Councilman-at-Large, Division B - Elton Lagasse
Bruce Layburn - <b>Secretary</b>	Home Builders Association
Mario Bazile	District 5 - Cynthia Lee Sheng
David Colvin	Jefferson Chamber of Commerce - West Bank
Tina Dandry-Mayes	Women Business Council Gulf Coast
Bruce Dantin	District 2 - Paul Johnston
Joe Ewell (Past Chairman)	District 3 - Mark Spears
Jim Garvey (Past Chairman)	Committee for Better Jefferson
Roy Gattuso	District 1 - Ricky Templet
Steve LaChute	Councilman At Large, Division A - Chris Roberts
Joe Liss	East Jefferson Business Association
Mark Madderra	Apartment Association of Greater N.O.
Dr. Vinicio Madrigal (Past Chairman)	Parish President - John Young
Lynda Nugent-Smith (Past Chairwoman)	N.O. Metropolitan Association of Realtors
Bill Peperone (Past Chairman)	District 4 - Ben Zahn
Mayra Pineda	Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
John Tobler	Elmwood Business Association
Stan Salathe (Past Chairman)	Harvey Canal Industrial Association
Patrice Williams-Smith	Greater New Orleans Black Chamber of Commerce

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PRESS RELEASE  
December 19, 2013

## A New Frontier: 2013 in Review

**Happy Holidays!** We hope each and every one of you are enjoying this festive season.

As 2013 comes to a close, the [Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission \(JEDCO\)](#) would like to take time to reflect. It was a groundbreaking year for this organization on a number of levels. We attracted [major companies](#) to Jefferson Parish, projects that total over a billion dollars in investment, and approved the [largest SBA 504 loan](#) in our 27-year history.



The [Patrick F. Taylor Science and Technology Academy](#) opened in the Churchill Technology and Business Park and we announced in November an exciting new partnership with [Delgado Community College](#). We have plans to open the JEDCO Conference Center, also in the tech park, at the beginning of the New Year. We welcomed fresh faces to the organization and created a new position to focus on [Innovation and Entrepreneurship](#).

Speaking of entrepreneurship, we successfully launched our first-ever Jefferson Parish-based [pitch competition](#) for local entrepreneurs this year. We partnered with [Cordina New Orleans Cocktails](#) to host the event during [Idea Village's New Orleans Entrepreneur Week \(NOEW\)](#). Our winner, Billy Bosch of [Be Well Nutrition, Inc.](#), walked away from the event with more than \$50,000 in direct capital and in-kind services donated by our dedicated business community.

The event was so successful we decided to host it for a second year. We're already building our prize package. Currently valued at more than \$13,000 (and growing), the 2014 prize package includes services or cash from the following: [Gambel Communications](#), [MMI Culinary Services](#), the [Jefferson Chamber](#) of Commerce, Cordina New Orleans Cocktails, the [JEDCO Business Innovation Center](#), [Journey](#) and [Ardyn M. Thriffiley and Associates](#). The application will launch online on January 7<sup>th</sup>. Interested in applying? Want to get involved? Click [here](#)





for details.

All year, we've worked closely with our partners on a local, state and regional level. The collaboration between various business organizations and our Parish government has made Jefferson Parish an ideal community in which to do business. From our own organization's standpoint, we feel so fortunate to have forged strong relationships with organizations like the Jefferson Chamber and [Greater New Orleans, Inc.](#), along with our [Parish government](#). Their support and assistance over the years have helped to positively influence the economic viability of Jefferson Parish.

### Business Blurbs



[1st Lake Properties, Inc.](#) and Favrot and Shane Companies, Inc. recently broke ground on their newest apartment community near Elmwood. The community, called [Bella Ridge Apartments](#), will feature upscale one and two bedroom apartments. They are scheduled to open in spring of 2014.

The [OHANA Modern Fusion Sushi Bar](#) opened in Fat City in early December. It is one of several new businesses to have popped up in that community in recent months. Efforts have been ongoing to

revitalize Fat City.

As we transition into the New Year, we're pleased to introduce Greg Jordan as the new JEDCO Chairman. Greg joined the JEDCO Board in March of 2009, serving as the board's Treasurer and the Chairman of the JEDCO Finance Committee in 2013. Click [here](#) to see a full list of board members and 2014 officers.

### Economic Accolades

Earlier this month, we hosted our 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Luncheon, giving us an opportunity to connect with the business community and thank them for their unwavering support over the years. The JEDCO Luncheon also serves as a platform to [recognize several businesses](#), organizations and individuals that have made a lasting impact on our economic development efforts. This year, we honored Kajun Kettle Foods, Inc., Mitch Theriot and the Jefferson Parish Drainage Department, Billy Bosch of Be Well Nutrition, Inc. and Kenner Mayor Mike S. Yenni.

### Looking Ahead

From Dyno Nobel and Starr Textiles to [new tenants](#) in the Churchill Technology and Business Park and an exciting [event](#) for our entrepreneurial community, JEDCO's 2013 has been busy and exciting. As we move into the New Year, [a new frontier](#), we stay committed to the JEDCO mission: to attract, retain and expand businesses within Jefferson Parish while influencing the economy and providing support to our businesses every single day.

Thank you so much for another year of your support. May you and your families have a wonderful holiday!

# SILICON BAYOU NEWS

## JEDCO Celebrates Best Year Yet, Announces 2013 Business Award Winners

[Julia Ballard](#) | January 3, 2014 | [0 Comments](#)



The [Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission](#) (JEDCO) is always excited to highlight its yearly successes, especially after marking 2013 as the best year yet. In December, hundreds of Jefferson Parish business and community leaders were in attendance as JEDCO announced the recipients of its 2013 business award winners at the JEDCO Annual Luncheon.



Be Well Nutrition founder Billy Bosch took home the first-ever Innovation of the Year Award for his product ICONIC, a healthy lifestyle beverage manufactured by the company. Be Well Nutrition also won the Cordina Challenge, put on by JEDCO, during New Orleans Entrepreneur Week back in March.

The organization's Small Business Award went to local Kajun Kettle Foods, Inc, the 32 year old food manufacturer that employs 34 while continuing to grow.

Other awards include the Chairman's Champion Award, which went to JEDCO Chairman of the Board Stan Salathe, and the Business Retention and Expansion Award, presented to Mitch Theriot and the

Jefferson Parish Drainage Department.

"This group of award winners highlights the strength, talents and dedication to business found within Jefferson Parish," says JEDCO Executive Director Jerry Bologna. "These men and women, recognized for their achievements, play a vital role in the prosperity of our community. Not only do they work to increase the economic vitality of our region, but they continue to give back and make positive change as we move into the future. We are so grateful for the contributions they have made to this community."



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To learn more, call 504-875-3908 or visit [www.churchillpark.org](http://www.churchillpark.org).

Google headquarters for an exclusive marketing workshop. The company sells its beanies in more than 500 small stores and cancer centers nationwide.

**What happened:**

Louisiana strawberry farmers say it's not the exceptionally cold weather but last year's rainy winter that has cut into their strawberry crops, reducing what's being made available to local grocers and farmer's markets.



**What's next:** The cold snaps aren't killing the strawberry harvests, merely delaying them, leading farmers to predict better crops for March and early spring.

**What happened:** The Jefferson Parish Council approved a two-year agreement last week to hire a consultant to oversee the redevelopment of Fat City.

**What's next:** The Jefferson Chamber Foundation will pay the consultant \$25,000 from taxes collected within the Metairie CBD for the area's economic development. The council stopped short of creating a government staff position, but the consultant could take part in handling code enforcement issues.

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—Dr. Laney Chouest, NOLA Motorsports

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elmwood business association