



The mission of St. Landry Parish Economic Development is to provide leadership in economic and community development that facilitates growth opportunities leading to enhanced prosperity for St. Landry Parish businesses, communities, its citizens and its youth.

Executive Directors Report

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I - Business Center/Small Business Update

The Business Center continues to be a community and business resource for conducting training and counseling sessions and various types of board and planning sessions for multiple entities. Just of few of these entities are the Louisiana Small Business Development Center at ULL, the new Event Center Joint Commission, SLP Moving Forward Leadership meetings, development project related meetings, as well as broad variety of coordination meetings for various parish wide initiatives.

In addition, SLED's ongoing partnership with ULL SBDC continues to serve as an added value to entrepreneurs throughout our area via monthly one-on-one consulting sessions with those individuals looking to start-up their own business and/or need additional tools and resources to grow/expand. The ULL SBDC has designated the second Tuesday of each month solely for St. Landry Parish to provide services; the next session will be February 16, 2016. It is important to note at this month's January session a total of three (3) individuals were provided free consultation regarding business start-up, growth and/or expansion, proving this service is needed and being well utilized throughout our parish by our residents.

Their next scheduled business support workshop will be entitled *The St. Landry Parish Banker's Forum* which will be co-sponsored by SLED and the SCPDC on January 21st on the campus of SLED. The forum will be an informational seminar open to all loan officers throughout the parish to inform those banking customers not eligible for traditional bank loans on a alternative loan program offered through LSBDC from monies secured through SCPDC for funds up to \$250,000.00 for industrial, and manufacturing related existing businesses, as well as retail start-ups.

Action items completed under the recently awarded FY2016 LED/LBIA Grant for improvements/upgrades to the building include:

- Construction and completion of previous break room area entrance way.
- Construction and upgrade completion of back area bathroom regarding ADA compliance.
- Construction and facelift completion to back office entrance area.
- Construction and completion to Board Room back wall area.
- Conversion and completion to storage unit (A) located in warehouse area to a climate controlled storage unit.
- Conversion, construction and completion to office space located in upstairs area of warehouse to be multi-functional serving as additional storage and/or warehouse office with the recent installment of office window.
- Finishing off a partition wall for additional secure storage in the southeast corner of the building.
- Reinstallation of Business Center attic.
- Conversion, construction and completion of wall, door and addition of windows to a once open area of the incubator to develop additional office space in the center.

In the coming month we will focus our efforts to multiple technology upgrades throughout the center with remaining grant dollars which will include wireless teleconference capabilities and liteshow additions for presentation and videoconference purposes.

We have the following tenant activity at the Business Center as of Jan 1st:

C&C Painting and Pressure Washing

Excellent Drivers Academy

Boone Speech and Learning Services

Miracle Ear

Happy Housemaids

Magnolia Community Development Corporation

Victory Manufacturing

WIB 40 (January 1st)

Double J Express, LLC (tentatively February 1st)

II – Communications

It will always be a work in progress in looking at ways to further enhance the online brand and image of SLED and St Landry Parish as being positive and progressive. We would urge all of you to regularly review our primary website at www.opportunitystlandry.com and further www.SLPforward.com. We would to hear your ideas and experiences of best practices that we could consider incorporating into one or both of these online portals.

To date www.slpforward.com, currently holds a total of twenty-nine (29) articles shining the light on positive things happening throughout St. Landry Parish. One (1) article per week is uploaded onto the site on a consistent basis providing fresh and updated article content. This initiative is now actively supporting NPR radio. We have even seen the slogan being tossed around early on in the new JB Edwards administration with some of their promotion efforts.

With the website's foundation now solid, a Google analytics test was recently conducted to track website traffic directly to the site. It was discovered that during the time period of December 8 – January 6, 2016 the slpforward.com had a total of 1,042 views up from the previous month of 842 views stemming primarily from the 25 – 34 age demographic with an average of 120 users returning to review updated content. This data is indicative of our growing web presence online. Also, it is important to note that in recent weeks we have opened the comment section as it relates to article(s) viewed on site and the feedback received to date has been overwhelmingly positive and a sign changes in perception in terms of St. Landry Parish's future outlook. Our goal for 2016 is to exceed 2000 monthly views.

The revamped SLPForward website layout created by Ahmed Siddiqui, now gives the viewer a more accurate preview of our stories that define our parish. This new display is a more comfortable browsing and reading experience, its stories primed for sharing with friends and colleagues. Due to this change our bounce rate has decreased by roughly 5% as well as an overall increase in pages viewed per session with a total of 470 new users since redesign.

Due in large part to the information included in SLPforward.com, we have been approached and are actively in the process of having an exclusive done on the business climate in St Landry Parish by Business in Focus Magazine. This is a national publication that boasts a monthly magazine print distribution of around 380,000. We anticipate this focus article to be included in their February print edition.

Our continuing efforts for completion of a GIS platform are ongoing and phase 1 of mapping tool can now be found on the home page of www.opportunitystlandry.com. We are currently working diligently with multiple stakeholder entities throughout the

parish to ensure we incorporate and highlight our area's greatest assets and what tools and information are most beneficial to our constituents as well as site selectors, tourist, companies etc. Some of the enhanced GIS layers being built now include:

- The top employers in the parish by sector
- An updated overlay on the Parish Road Home Program
- Training institutions in the parish
- Core cultural resources in the parish
- An up to date commercial property listings

These features represent upgrades to the system beyond the core base layers typically included in standard GIS offerings. We are also working through AEDC to have a uniform base GIS economic development platform for all the EDO's in a seven parish regional area around Acadiana.

III - Property Development (Large-scale)

Significant work continues using taxing districts as a means to help communities upgrade infrastructure capacity along the major I-49 exits as well as along Hwy 190. We continue to work with the Mayors and other community leaders in most of the impacted communities in discussion about formal planning efforts for their communities, and/or the ability to establish economic development taxing districts that can help provide direct, or matching funding for improvement projects. We still continue to work with active development project at four of the major interchanges on the I-49 corridor. Each of these developments has the potential for a large development that creates numerous new business opportunities.

Site development efforts with the newly formed team of 1 Acadiana continues to get added priority emphasis regionally, but have been temporarily put on hold by state LED as he takes time to align their annual priorities, along with the new Governor. Our goal is to work towards 2 shovel ready sites in SLP for 2016. This fits one of the key economic development priorities for One Acadiana in actively pursuing industrial development opportunities.

IV Projects Update Summary: 16 Active, 2 New (Shell, Barrier) 2 Pending Announcement, (Lid, Lot) 14 Announced, 1 Parked, (End Termination) 1 Pending Park (Prop)

Project Amber – This project continues to be in the discussions with rail upgrades in the Opelousas Industrial Park. It is part of the picture of a rail master plan, which has multiple partners in discussion as part of the ongoing planning process. Recently, it has come to light that this project also comes into consideration of a corporate merger with one of their main customers, which should be clear by February. We will keep the project on the active list in the interim. If successful this project could create up to 10 full time positions.

Project Barrier – This is a large manufacturing project that is being worked through LED. We have submitted a proposed industrial site for the project through the site development team at One Acadiana. This project at full development will create up to 500 new direct full time positions. We anticipate an initial 90 to 120 review period before the next phase of the project moves forward with a narrowed site selection list.

Project Base – This is a project looking at the utilization of one of core parish transportation facility assets for international business investment. We are still working through due diligence on feasibility. There are not direct job creation, or capital investment figures for this project at this point, but their representatives are eluding to a very large investment in the Parish.

Project Clean – This is a manufacturing infill development project located in the center of the parish. We are continuing solid progress with their leadership in multiple areas with this project. Contractor bids are now being finalized and we could have a solid view of whether the project will come to build/rebuild stage over the next 60 days. If successful this project could create 50 new direct positions.

Project Code – This is an expansion project focused on light manufacturing looking to locate on the main transportation corridor in the center of the Parish. The company is conducting interim operations at their present location, but needs extra capacity to reach full potential. The challenge with this expansion continues to be site location along the I-49 Corridor. We are continuing to facilitate discussions and plans with land owners along the corridor on suitable sites for this effort. This project could add up to 20 additional full time positions.

Project Expo – An update on some of the high level activities associated with this project will be provided for on the regular board meeting agenda related to this project and the property for the event Center.

Project Focus – This is a large scope sector driven project dealing with historic properties in the center and northern parts of the parish. Since this is a “sector” project the number of jobs created would vary by individual properties/events. Progress has been very slow, this has been in large part due to the lessening of state level incentives specific to the industry, but we are still optimistic that some recent discussions by municipal leadership in the middle of the parish may help to give this project some additional momentum, particularly in downtown related properties.

Project Fountain – This is a large scale commercial development project that discussions have been ongoing for some time national tenants are committed to this project and negotiations with landowners and real estate development partner are continuing on a regular basis. We will be exploring the potential this over the next month to combine these negotiations with an interest in Project Expo. In either event, this is still a large project that would be developed over time in phases.

Project Glare – This is a light industrial manufacturer with locations in other states that is looking to add an additional facility here in the Parish. We are working with them at

this time on identifying suitable site locations/costs. We anticipate this process continuing over the next 30 to 60 days on finding a good location. Initial job creation figures are up to 35 direct full time positions being created.

Project HIPPO – This is a heavy industrial project that is in its early stages, but that continues to make good progress. The project is very large in scope on its investment and job creation potential. Currently, we are working with regional and state partners on identifying and meeting engineering requirements on the footprint site. We hope to have the initial site work requirement completed by the end of the 2nd quarter of 2016, which is happening in unison with industrial layout discussions. There are not accurate job projection figures available on this project, but it has the potential to be very high with both job creation and capital expenditures.

Project Lid – This project is a manufacturer planning to locate along one of our key transportation corridors. The company closed on their purchase agreement on property and is working through site layout and building architectural on the production facility now. Although the project has been delayed overall by about 60 to 90 days beyond their initial projections they still anticipate a formal announcement and groundbreaking in the 1st Quarter of 2016. This project will relocate up to 100 immediate jobs and has potential to add an extra 75 full time direct positions to the parish for a total of 175 positions.

Project Lot – This project is the expansion of an existing parish company into construction at new location and the further modification and refit of their existing facility within the parish. The property for this site has been closed on and although there have been some delays; we now anticipate a groundbreaking on this project in January due to some delays in the corporate approval of the site plan. Assuming the existing facility backfills the same number of positions in its new use this project would create 45 new direct full time positions. The existing location now has approximately 25 full time positions.

Project Neighbor – This is a medium size retail location project on the western side of the parish. The project continues to work through, contracting and due diligence and now additional challenges with land acquisition. We hope to have some resolution on the land contract with this project one way, or another in the next several weeks. If successful, this project could create up to 100 direct full time positions.

Project Prop - This was a general RFP by LED that was submitted by our team through the team at One Acadiana. We anticipate the short list for this project being announced sometime later this month. Indications from LED appear as though this site will not be included into the next search phase, but this has not been confirmed. This project will go on the parked list next month pending no new updates. This project is in the initial stages that if successful would create 20-30 net new direct jobs. Pending final confirmation, this project will likely be parked.

Project Shell – This was a previously parked project that now has been brought back into play in St Landry Parish. The project has a facility secured currently and is looking to refocus their feasibility back at this site. We anticipate a determination on the refocus of this project on the site over the next 90 days. If successful this project could create up to 20 new positions.

Project Vertical – This project is dealing with a light industrial manufacturer looking to put a new production facility in the Parish. We are currently working on site locations offering suitable heavy transportation access, but have developed a strong interest by the company in a site next to the Distribution Center. It is possible that we could have an offer on property to the SLED board for this site plan within the next 45 to 60 days. If successful this project would create up to 30 direct full time positions.

Announced Projects

Project Outpost (A) – Announced Recruitment - This is a one of a kind Loves Travel Center that broke ground early in January 2016 in Port Barre. This will be the first center for Loves not located on an interstate highways. The location will serve as a full service 24 Hour travel center with a Subway Restaurant on location. This project will create at up to 35 direct full time positions.

Project Bayou – Announced Recruitment - This Wal-Mart Neighbor Center projected was announced earlier this month as being an example of highlighting the retail development potential here in the center of the Parish. This project is well into its construction process now and is projecting a formal opening on January 20th. This project will create between 90 and 100 direct full time positions.

Project Slip – Announced Expansion - This project was a major turnaround project with the Alon Refinery in Krotz Springs. The company made major investments in this effort, which brings significantly enhanced capacity to the Alon facility. For industry concerns the company would prefer that this project not be included in a major press announcement. This does not diminish the positive impact on our parish from this project. SLP Tourism continues to recognize record breaking lodging numbers for the later portion of 2015 as temporary workers made their place in area hotels, campgrounds, and RV Facilities. Over 2000 temporary construction jobs were brought into the parish with this effort. We are working now to confirm the number of permanent jobs that will ultimately be created with this expansion. We do not anticipate this number exceeding 15 in total.

Project Outpost – Announced Recruitment - This is the original Project Outpost. This project, the Go Bear Travel Center is going to be opening its doors within the next 2 weeks. The company is Gaubert Oil, which is base out of the Houma Thibodaux area and will be the 13th retail travel facility for the company. We along with Acadiana Works has been providing various levels of hiring assistance, including the use of the Business Center to interview management candidates for the new facility. This project is projected to create up to 45 new full time positions.

Project Lynx – Announced Recruitment -This project, The Hazelwood Energy Project, was formally announced on Sept 30th. This project is projected to create 123 direct full time positions, 135 indirect positions and 200 temporary construction related positions. Initial capital investment projections on this project are 400 million. This project also has the potential to lay the framework for significant future development.

Project Spin – Announced Recruitment This project is a small project that we are piloting as an incubation for oil field support services in C&C machining with Victory Manufacturing. We had hoped throughout the later part of 2015 to make a large announcement, but the company principal had some health challenges that slowed their work to a temporary stop. We are hopeful that in supporting this area of high demand labor force that we will be able to keep some of our machinist workforce in the parish with career opportunities.

Project Lift – Announced Recruitment - This project was formally announced over the weekend. The company Air Evac Life team will be basing rotary wing operations out of the St Landry Parish Airport. They are completing significant upgrades to one of the existing facilities and now have aircraft on the ground to assume operations. This successful project further highlights the huge upside for the SLP Airport, which tends to get overlooked as a key transportation asset of St Landry Parish. This project is anticipated to create 16 direct full time positions.

Project Strip – Announced Expansion - This is a large commercial project on a large multi-tenant commercial facility located on the I-49 Service road corridor, St Landry Plaza. The company, Rock Step Capital, made a formal announcement earlier this month through their President, My Andy Wiener. He pledged to bring as many as 8 new national tenants to the facility over the next 2 years. This project could allow for up to 75 direct full time and a greater number of part time employees.

Project Essen - Announced Expansion Crest Industries, based in Pineville, Louisiana, will invest \$5 million to develop a new cutting, machining and fabrication facility in Eunice and add new machining centers to existing PCS equipment. Crest will retain 18 PCS jobs, and the expansion project will create 20 new jobs averaging \$50,000 per year, plus benefits. LED estimates the investment will result in an additional 24 indirect jobs, for a total of 44 new jobs in the Acadiana Region.

Project Rip – Announced Recruitment - This Company, Top Timber, and deals with the timber hardwood related processing. It is located to the rear of S&B Sawmill in the proximity of the Wal-Mart Distribution Center. The company had indicated that it could initially employ up to 12 full time positions with the potential to grow very quickly if certain international agreements can be established.

Project Roto – Announced Expansion - This is an existing company within the Parish, Noble Plastics that has acquired the Yahoo building to begin production of additional plastics components through a process call roto mold plastics production. There is a good potential that this project would bring in a partner supplier, Project Mat. This

project will initially create 15 or less direct full time positions, but has a great potential for future expansion.

Project Alon – Announced Expansion - The Alon Refinery has recently completed an expansion at their facility to include the building of a rail transfer facility that will allow them more efficiently loading on and off load bulk rail materials to be utilized both in and out of their production facility. The project will create as many as 12 full time positions.

Project Runway – Announced Recruitment: A formal announcement was made for this project Thursday, February 20th at 1:30 PM at their new construction site just past Beau Chene High School. We conducted a follow-up site visit last week. There is solid progress on the foundation structure, which is the most time consuming portion of their building process. The company expects operations to commence in a matter of weeks. This project will create as many as 25 direct full time positions.

Project Martin – Announced Expansion: Bayou State Lumber Company, LLC, formerly known as Acadiana Hardwood, LLC. This company will create 29 permanent new jobs and retain 21. This mill is the only viable employment opportunity for most individuals in the area.

V – Area and Regional Development Items:

Collaboration efforts with the St. Landry Chamber of Commerce board are moving forward at multiple levels. Jody Soileau is the new board chair as of the 1st of the year. We will be continuing to work on items such as our capital outlay request for the 2016 Legislative Session, slpforward.com, as well as looking to formalize strategy on initiatives that will have a direct impact on St Landry Parish Businesses.

Our work with SLP Tourism also continues to move forward. At their board meeting last week Celeste was able to report one of the strongest income months that they have experienced to fourth quarter of 2015. This was likely do in large part to the temporary workforce created by Project Slip We continue to regularly collaborate on regional and state priorities that are important to the cultural economy of SLP, both through our Cornerstone collaboration, as well as other areas, such as the Parish GIS Project, slpforward.com and the St Luke’s Hospital Project.

We are resetting the meter on our BERG collaboration meetings with SLP companies. Throughout 2015 we tracked the progress of many of the companies we met with throughout the year. In 2016 we look to expand that visitation base to 30 of the top sector employers we have in the Parish. With many of the challenges facing the regional economy it is important that we do everything we can to take care of our core employers.

We have received the final deliverables from efforts as part of the advisory committee for a major United Way Effort economic analysis project called The ALICE Project. We will be able to formally share these results publicly at the end of January. It is our hope this comprehensive research effort will help provide some critical answers on key

workforce issues due to underlying societal issues that may not always be apparent and perhaps open the door to being able to provide more detailed economic grant related data.

We are continuing efforts with Cornerstone Governmental Affairs, SLED, SLP Government, SLP Tourism, SLP CHOC, and SLP Solid Waste on funding priorities for the 2016 Capital Outlay Session. These requests are now in for the 2016 session. We are once again having bi-weekly conference calls with our partner entities to ensure strong communication on the latest progress. We are also working now with Cornerstone to sit down face to face with all of our elected delegation to bring them up to date and start to build that new relationship with some of our freshly elected delegation.

We are moving forward with active participation in multiple areas with the newly formed Acadiana Planning Commission, APC and its newly incorporated Metropolitan Planning Organization. In addition to providing us updated traffic counts on key thoroughfare updated traffic counts for us on key transportation areas in the Parish primarily in and around I-49 and the close proximity Hwy 190 areas.

We are continuing our active efforts with a board seat on the ARA (Acadiana Regional Alliance), which is an additional component of the 1 Acadiana effort to bring a collective voice together to enhance regional economic and community development efforts. Some of the key items of consideration at the last board meeting were in depth discussions on the I-49 extension efforts, the Acadiana Regional Food Alliance, best practices by area Chambers of Commerce and an the discussion of an early planning for an Acadiana Day at the State Capitol.

AEDC (Acadiana Economic Development Council)

We are nearing the deadline for an exciting regional business accelerator program that would be cooperative initiative with InnoV8 Acadiana, seven parish economic development organizations, and Winrock International. This is in part funded through an EDA matching grant in order to get full funding. We are coming to the deadline for this project later this month.

As a fallback to this initiative if the timing does not correspond with the Winrock project we are looking at the potential to support a workforce testing facility at LSU-E and also looking to reimburse local EDO's for qualifying funds usage for eligible workforce development, marketing, or other eligible actives up to a cap limit.

Other items we are considering funding include:

Purchasing Sales Force CRM tracking for the all EDO's in the region

Funding a portion of a comprehensive workforce strategy to address placement of impacted workers from the mining sector

Funding a portion of a detailed economic impact analysis of the of the I-49 extension.

Setting aside a small pot of funds for a film series initiative being developed for Acadiana.

Professional high grade photography of key employers in the region

Drone flyovers of key Acadiana Assets

Promoting high profile recruiting trips, such as the Site Selectors Guild.

We continue quality interaction on multiple levels with the staff at OA as we look to enhance the economic development capacity for region. As a reminder, their economic development priorities for 2016 are:

- Maintaining strong executive leadership and financial support for LED.
- Proactively pursuing industry development for Acadiana.
- Restoring, protecting, and reforming key economic development incentive programs.
- Supporting game changing opportunities.

We anticipate the role later this month out of a comprehensive regional economic development analysis that was done by Jay Garner and Associates. We anticipate this will give a clearer regional strengths and opportunities blue print that we can quickly adapt into formal strategies to target over both the near and mid-term.

VI – Community Development in St Landry Parish

With a business plan that focuses on the Cultural Economy of Arnaudville with an emphasis on the alternative usage of St Luke’s Hospital we are now facilitating efforts between Parish Presidents on legal options for valuation and transfer of ownership with the facility. We are further exploring the potential to establish an economic development district if the facility were to transfer to the control of St Landry Parish. To a lesser extent, we are also providing technical assistance in the structure of a 501c3 dealing with the cultural economy in that area that could potentially operate such a facility under the right structure and contractual agreement.

The Washington Steamboat City Association continues to work on an initiative to deal with substandard housing in Washington both by seeking grants and partners for larger-scale work and by working with local churches to organize youth groups and other working parties to do minor repairs.

The Historic Washington Art Gallery, continues to organize through the association, held its second open house on Dec. 5 and had good patronage. Eight artists exhibit at the gallery. Sales have been sufficient to cover costs plus give them a small profit.

This is in part due to Washington’s designation as a state cultural district. Steamboat City Association is the designated administrative agency for the Historic Washington

Cultural District. We have just completed the annual report for the district, documenting creation and operation of the art gallery, work toward promoting the upcoming Washington tricentennial, and work with St. Landry Economic Development to promote cultural tourism in Washington and throughout the parish.

They recently funded a student garden program at Washington Elementary, which is part of a larger goal toward organizing community gardens.

They are studying revision of the provisions under which Steamboat City Association scholarships are awarded, taking into greater account the need of the student as well as the academic potential

In the 4th quarter we had the initial pilot program meeting this month in Opelousas with LED and State Main Street that is designed to help downtown businesses succeed. Opelousas is one of only 4 communities in the state selected to participate in this program. Building on this and other momentum, we are making some progress with the Opelousas leadership now to explore options for them to consider using the resources of the APC to help identify and prioritize some of the key priorities that will make significant positive impacts in the City. The need for this proactive planning was directly highlighted in some recent controversial council decisions that allowed a new commercial business on Highway 182 (Union Street).

We have spent extensive time with the new Chancellor for LSU-E, Dr. Kimberly Russell, who will officially assume her new role effective September 1st. We are working now with Dr. Russell to assist with establishing their workforce testing center and the establishment of their new position, Vice Chancellor of Economic and Workforce Development. We will also remain engaged with their Advisory Board that intends start meeting on a more frequent basis than the previous annual meetings.

In a similar capacity, we will be sitting down next month with Dr. Natalie Harder, the Chancellor for SLCC in order to develop a set of targeted strategies for the TH Harris campus that will effectively meet the needs of business in this area.

We continue to work with the leadership of Port Barre in their efforts to formally move forward as one of only five communities in Acadiana that will participating in a pilot planning program offered through the Acadiana Planning Commission, APC. This initiative has been approved by their council and is now in the contractual process.

We also continue to work with the leadership in Eunice on moving forward with updating a comprehensive plan and a follow up action plan to move strategic priorities forward. In an exciting development last week, the city council voted to establish the legal language for a Eunice Planning Commission, as well as to formally identify the funds needed to engage the APC in a formal 12 month planning priority process for the city.

Our efforts in support of the community of Grand Coteau have further paid dividends in a positive way with their approval this month to move forward with contract with the APC to do a 12 month strategic planning a prioritization effort for their community. This process will ultimately allow businesses in the district a voice in what infrastructure improvements are done and in what order they get listed and should get started over the next several weeks.

We have been actively engaged in multiple ways with the discussion of the I-49 South Coalition. The project is moving forward in many ways with the extension through Lafayette being the biggest hurdle in the project. The Lafayette portion is looking at 3.5 miles being elevated and 2 miles built at grade. The extension is project at 6 to 8 lanes and will have 20 total ramps. It will require modifications to the airport runway and will involve between 150 to 200 existing properties in its projected path.

We continue our work to support the St Landry Municipal Authority by working to provide direct information and future content presenters that can provide hands on information that can immediately be used as a tool by community leaders across the parish.

We are not giving up on discussions with the Wal-Mart DC executive team with community leaders from Washington on the potential for using the Wal-Mart Mentor Program for the small communities in the proximity of the DC. Realistically we don't anticipate any new movement on this until at least late January.

On Wednesday, January 20th the St. Landry Professionals are hosting a Leadership Development Series entitled LEAD St. Landry. LEAD St. Landry will include a total of six (6) sessions featuring top leaders from the Private and Public Sectors spanning across the Acadiana Region covering the following topics: Vision, Courage, Integrity, Humility, Strategic Planning, Focus and Cooperation. The development series will be held on the campus of LHC in Opelousas. LEAD St Landry is free for active SLP members and non-members can register for a total fee of \$60.00 @ \$10.00 a session.

Chris Rader founder and CEO of Rader solutions, a Lafayette, based IT Company that services the construction supply industry will serve as speaker. He is a true visionary and leading entrepreneur within the Acadiana region. Rader Solutions has been the premiere IT support service provider for mid-sized companies since it was founded in 1998. Chris Rader has been an integral component in developing a solid and robust infrastructure which has led to their success for the last 15 years

Grants Update:

FY2016 LBIA \$25,000 Grant building improvements have begun as of September 15, 2015. To date a total of thirteen of fourteen items have been completed.

The signage provided under the USDA RBEG Grant for the digital marquee is now fully functioning and has garnered rave reviews since its installation. A follow-up Civil Rights Site Visit was conducted on January 13th as part of grant requirements where no findings were found. SLED has now completed fulfilled all necessary obligations under grant and we have been approved for full reimbursement.

As part of our 2016 goal structure we will be looking to complete 2 successful grant applications that will make a meaningful impact on our mission and efforts to build capacity in the parish.

VII – Training Opportunities

Basic Economic Development Course; January 26 – 29, New Orleans

Course Overview: The Basic Economic Development Course is an introductory look at economic development in North America, with an emphasis on the state of Louisiana. Students are given an overview of the tools and techniques of modern economic development, including the professional specialties that have formed in the last 20 years.

VIII – Conclusion

What a year!! I believe we can honestly look back and say that despite many current economic factors that continue to cause concern for the Acadiana Economy in the minds of many people there is a renewed sense of “can do” in St Landry Parish. I truly believe that you as board members are the catalyst for helping to spread this message and for that we are very grateful. As our new branding campaign shows, there is lot to be proud of in SLP and a lot more coming.

2016 promises to be packed with challenges, but as we have always said, this is where the opportunities lay in disguise for the right kinds of proactive thinking. I want you all to know how much I appreciate your support in being such an integral part of making good things happen for other people. With your support we are continuing to grow the capacity of our organization, as well the prosperity of our parish. With your continued backing we will continue to hit 2016 running by expanding opportunities, growth, and positive impact across St Landry Parish!!