

HEADLINES

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Companies

Huntsville/Limestone County

Polaris announced the company will build a new \$142 million all terrain vehicle factory in Huntsville/Limestone County. The 453 acre, 600,000 s/f plant will employ 1,700 full time workers and increase that number to 2,000 within seven years. Polaris will begin construction in May with completion by the second quarter of 2016 and fully operational by 2017. Once completed, the plant will assemble off-road vehicles, build chassis, and do body painting, welding, fabrication and injection molding. The company's *RANGER* and *RZR* brands will begin rolling off the assembly line as early as the second quarter of 2016. In addition to a manufacturing plant, the facility will feature a research and development center and a distribution warehouse. This will be Polaris' second-largest facility. Polaris specializes in all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and has been in business more than 60 years.



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This company has made a commitment to economic development in North Alabama and we hope that companies considering a location in North Alabama will look to our Corporate Partners for their project services.

Expanding Companies

Cullman County

The Robson Company, Inc., located in Vinemont announced the company will invest \$150,000 to purchase new equipment and will hire 2 new employees. The facility does small-scale plastic injection molding, mold/tooling design and mold making.

Morgan County

Diamond Pro Corporation announced the company has purchased land, an existing building and will invest \$1.3 million to open a manufacturing facility in Hartselle Industrial Park. The plant will manufacture exercise and workout equipment. Diamond Pro will hire 24 employees over the next three years.

Hexcel Corporation, located in Mallard Fox Creek Industrial Park announced the addition of a new PAN line. The company will invest \$145 million and add 20 new jobs. Hexcel manufactures aircraft products and parts.

HEADLINES

UPDATES

Madison County

The Alabama auto industry set a record in 2014 with the production of almost 1 million vehicles. The Toyota Motor Manufacturing Huntsville plant set a new record building 610,000 engines. Alabama also reached an all-time high for annual engine production in 2014, manufacturing 1.67 million units.

Source: Economic Development Partnership of Alabama

Colbert County

Seaport Airlines, located in Northwest Alabama Regional Airport in Muscle Shoals, is now offering four direct flights daily to Nashville, TN. The airport offers free parking.

Cullman County

Cullman County industries invested approximately \$150 million in the community and created an estimated 700 new positions in 2014. Cullman's unemployment rate is among the lowest in the state.

EDUCATION

HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology

Foresight Biosciences, an associate company at the HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology, announces its enzymes and assay kits are now available to the glycobiology and pharmaceutical research markets. Glycosylation is the chemical process of attaching complex sugar molecules to proteins. The increasing number of glycosylated therapeutic proteins is driving a growing market for new products to assist in glycobiology research. Glycobiology is one of the most promising frontiers of molecular biology. Foresight's has developed innovative solutions which allow researchers quicker and more accurate results specifically focused on their needs and in addition, their products can be used for infectious diseases and protein therapeutics research.

VISITS

During the months of January and February, NAIDA assisted 1 prospect visit to North Alabama.

RECOGNITION

The Valley Sustainable Gold Communities Award

Florence, Huntsville, and Scottsboro were designated as Valley Sustainable Gold Communities. *"The Valley Sustainable Communities Program,"* now in its second year, was initiated by TVA Economic Development as part of its community preparedness offerings to assist communities in evaluating existing sustainable programs, cataloging their sustainable assets, and increasing future commitments to sustainability. The goal of the program is to document a community's assets and increase the likelihood they will be viewed as progressive and competitive by companies looking to invest in new and expanded locations.

Alabama No. 4 Nationwide

Area Development Magazine's *"Top States for Doing Business in 2014"* ranks Alabama No. 4 nationwide for its favorable business environment, labor climate, infrastructure and global access. From 2011 to 2013, economic development efforts resulted in more than 55,000 announced jobs and nearly \$14 billion in capital investment and 2008-2010 brought 47,000 announced jobs and \$8.6 billion in investment to Alabama.

"Best Place for Engineers in the U.S."

Nerdwallet ranked Huntsville the nation's *"Top Engineering City."* The personal finance website analyzed 350 metropolitan areas and commended the Rocket City for its heavy engineering base, high average engineering salary and low rent cost. Decatur placed No. 8. Six out of the top ten places chosen were in southern states with most of the areas having military bases, manufacturing centers and companies that provide competitive career opportunities for engineers. The size of the engineering industry and engineering income levels were the determining factors.

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