

P R E S S R E L E A S E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – August 26, 2008

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Workforce Analysis Completed for River Region

The workforce study undertaken by the River Region Economic Development Initiative (RREDI) is completed with detailed insight into the workforce situation for current and future workforce needs of employers in the River Parish Region. Below are just a few highlights in the report:



- Largest employment sectors in the region are manufacturing, logistics & distribution, retail trade and construction; however, the region is seeing expanding economic diversification with significant growth in the information and professional/scientific/technical services sectors (2000-2007);
- Occupations in greatest demand are engineering technicians, production operators, unskilled laborers, multi-skilled industrial maintenance mechanics and engineers, truck drivers and electrical & electronic repairers with a forecast for critical labor shortages;
- Employers report that more people are now available for hiring (hurricane recovery no longer a significant factor);
- Region has a hidden workforce of 14,133 residents, consisting of the under-employed, not-employed who want to work, and out-commuters;
- Region has a slightly younger workforce than the state and nation, an advantage;
- 99% of job-seekers have a high school diploma or GED, and 73% have some post-secondary education, most likely in technical-related fields; however, the region has a modestly educated adult population, which is an obstacle to growth.

The consultant team also outlined numerous recommendations for meeting workforce demands including expanding the training and degree programs at the Louisiana Technical

College to a broader cross-section of the workforce and encouraging dual enrollment for high school students that aren't anticipated to go to a four-year institution after graduation.

These highlights are just some of the findings of the comprehensive study. A copy of the report can be found on each of the parish government web sites and the Port of South Louisiana.

The Wadley-Donovan Group, a national workforce development consulting firm, and St. Charles Parish-based Workforce Alliance, conducted the study over a 5-month period. Research included an employer survey, employer focus groups, resident's underemployed survey, and workforce trends analysis.

The River Region Economic Development Initiative is an economic development alliance encompassing St. Charles, St. John and St. James parishes formed by these parishes and the Port of South Louisiana to spearhead the economic growth in the region. For more information contact Linda Prudhomme at 985-652-9278 or lprudhomme@portsl.com.