

McMinn County Economic Development Authority



Annual Report

FISCAL YEAR 2014

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To Our Stakeholders

Dear Stakeholders:

Thank you for your investment in the McMinn County Economic Development Authority. Your investment assists us with our mission to facilitate the creation and retention of quality jobs for the citizens of McMinn County and increase capital investment in McMinn County through a targeted marketing plan and program with regional partnerships.

In fiscal year 2014, we maintained a membership base of 66 members from the private sector and continued our partnership with our public contributors: McMinn County, the City of Athens, the City of Etowah and Athens Utilities Board. Public entities contributed 77.5 percent of our annual operating budget.

Fiscal Year 2014 was considered a rebuilding year for the McMinn County Economic Development Authority. With the new leadership of Kathy Knight, Executive Director, the organization focused on developing our brand and a program of work that was focused on strengthening McMinn County's competitive position in the global economic development arena.

I am very proud that our biggest accomplishment during fiscal year 2014 was the success in announcing the creation of 405 new industrial jobs and \$199.3 million in new capital investments for the community.

Thank you again for your investment in the McMinn County Economic Development Authority. We had a fiscally sound year thanks to your contribution and commitment to helping us grow McMinn County's economy.

Sincerely,

Durant Tullock
President (FY 2014)

Financial

An audit of the financial records by Ingram, Overholt, and Bean, P.C. for fiscal year 2014 has been completed and filed with the State of Tennessee Comptroller's Office. There were no findings in the financial audit. Copies of the audit are available.

MCMINN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
(A Nonprofit Organization)
STATEMENT OF NET POSITION
JUNE 30, 2014

ASSETS AND DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES

Current Assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 147,613	
Prepaid insurance	3,957	
Accounts receivable	<u>3,205</u>	
Total Current Assets		\$ 154,775
Capital assets, net		21,986
Non-depreciable Property held for resale:		
Mt. Verd Industrial Park	1,335,533	
Athens I-75 Industrial Park	1,815,969	
North Etowah Industrial Park	<u>457,154</u>	
Total Non-depreciable Property Held for Resale		3,608,656
Deferred outflows of resources		<u>-</u>
Total assets		<u>3,785,417</u>

LIABILITIES, DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES AND NET POSITION

Current Liabilities:		
Accounts payable	15,277	
Accrued retirement	15,090	
Note payable – current portion	<u>5,748</u>	
Total Current Liabilities		36,115
Long-Term Liabilities:		
Note payable - net of current portion	<u>5,410</u>	
Total liabilities		<u>41,525</u>
Deferred inflows of resources:		
Funding received in advance		<u>12,100</u>
Net position:		
Net investment in capital assets		10,828
Unrestricted		45,752
Restricted		<u>3,675,212</u>
Total net position		<u>\$ 3,731,792</u>

See accompanying independent auditors' report and notes.

MCMINN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
(A Nonprofit Organization)
SCHEDULE OF EXPENSES
JUNE 30, 2014

	Program <u>Services</u>	Supporting <u>Services</u>	<u>Total</u>
Advertising and promotion	\$ 1,806	\$ -	\$ 1,806
Audit and legal	-	8,203	8,203
Depreciation	-	14,725	14,725
Dues and subscriptions	5,191	-	5,191
Health/life/disability insurance	10,080	4,320	14,400
Industrial property expenditures:			
Insurance	633	-	633
Athens I-75 Industrial Park	15,402	-	15,402
Mt. Verd Industrial Park	89,223	-	89,223
North Etowah Industrial Park	74	-	74
Project Stopwatch	555,170	-	555,170
Local transportation	-	4,962	4,962
Miscellaneous	-	311	311
Office expenses	-	4,986	4,986
Payroll taxes	7,115	1,256	8,371
Postage	13	-	13
Printing	500	-	500
Retirement	6,788	1,198	7,986
Salaries	90,666	16,000	106,666
Salute to Industry Day	-	7,657	7,657
Telephone and internet	4,125	-	4,125
Business insurance	3,655	-	3,655
Website development/hosting	15,635	-	15,635
Travel and business development	<u>9,417</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,417</u>
 Total expenses	 <u>\$ 815,493</u>	 <u>\$ 63,618</u>	 <u>\$ 879,111</u>

See independent auditor's report and notes.

Achievements & Activities

Business Recruitment, Expansion, & Retention

Fiscal Year 2014 saw an improvement in economic activity in McMinn County. Staff was active in construction project management of the Adler Pelzer (aka H.P. Pelzer) facility that was announced in the latter part of fiscal year 2013. Construction was completed and the company started production in March 2014. This facility promises the creation of 201 new jobs and \$28 million investment. At the end of fiscal year 2014, the company had 100 employed at the facility.



Figure 1 H.P. Pelzer Facility

New prospect activity improved throughout the year with the Development Authority submitting 29 proposals to companies exploring new industrial locations. This was triple the amount of proposals that were submitted in fiscal year 2013. The automotive sector led new industry prospect activity with suppliers looking for new facilities for the pending Volkswagen SUV announcement.

Staff actively recruited new industries to all available industrial properties and buildings, both publicly and privately owned. In addition to responding to requests for information from the State of Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD), the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), the Southeast Industrial Development Association (SEIDA), and the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce, staff met with site consultants, developers, contractors, and individual companies to promote McMinn County and our available industrial properties. Staff attended events where industrial site location consultants were present to network, strengthen relationships, and to further promote McMinn County. Staff attended the

Southern Economic Development Council Meet the Consultants event, the German American Chamber of Commerce opening, the Southeast U.S. Canada (SEUS-Canada) Annual Conference, and co-hosted the SEIDA 3.3.1 Regional FAM Tour for site consultants. Staff also hosted three new ECD Project Managers on a tour of the community and available industrial sites.

Staff also focused on further developing relationships with Tech 20/20, the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and the University of Tennessee Center. These relationships are important in identifying product commercialization opportunities that may be available from research and development activities at these institutions. Staff attended the Tennessee Valley Corridor National Summit in Chattanooga to further identify opportunities, and learn about new programs in this five-state region that may enhance our existing industries.

Staff visited with existing industries throughout the year to establish/strengthen relationships and to understand the needs of our local industries. These visits are instrumental for our retention and expansion programs and have proved valuable in being able to attract new investment in our local industries.

Existing industries in McMinn County saw positive post-recessionary improvements with production levels at or near pre-recessionary levels. Manufacturing employment increased 35 percent between 2010, the peak of the recession, and the end of Fiscal Year 2014 (see Figure 2). Denso Manufacturing Athens Tennessee (DMAT) announced a \$55 million expansion and 130 new jobs in January of 2014. In addition, E&E Manufacturing announced a 25 job and \$11.3 million expansion. Resolute Forest Products, after seeing a 150 job layoff in March 2013 and ceasing production of newsprint, announced in March 2014 plans to invest \$105 million into the Calhoun Mill with the addition of 50 new jobs.

405

New Jobs



\$199.3 M

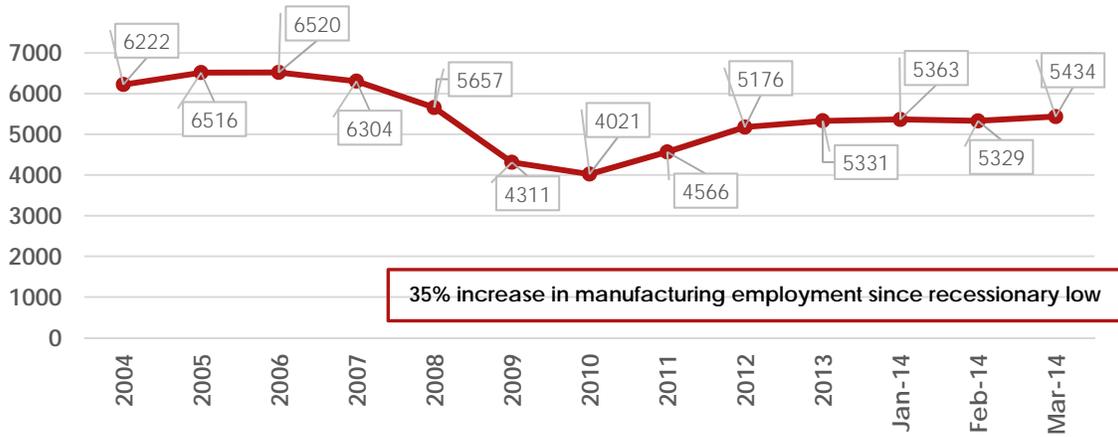
Capital Investment



Mr. Richard Garneau, President and CEO of Resolute Forest Products, commented on their \$105 million expansion at the Calhoun, Tennessee Mill. "This investment will make a good mill even better. It will improve the mill's long-term competitiveness by lowering its costs and giving it the flexibility to adjust grade production to changing market dynamics. This is a significant capital project, which reflects the company's commitment to this facility and confidence in the business environment in Tennessee."

Unemployment continued to drop through fiscal year 2014 as employers saw the economy and production levels improving. Unemployment dropped from 9.4% at the first of the fiscal year (July 2013) to 8.2% at the end of the fiscal year (June 2014). See Figure 3.

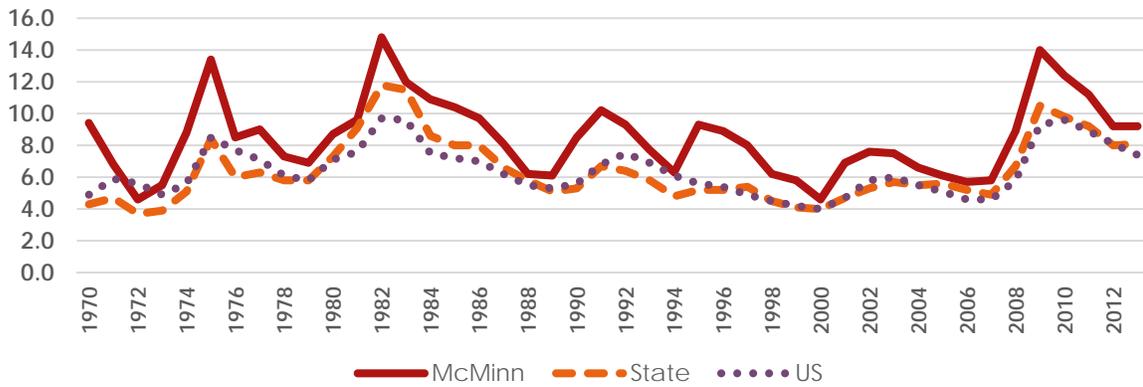
**Manufacturing Employment, Private
McMinn County, TN 2004-2014**



Source: US DOL Bureau of Labor Statistics

Figure 2

**Unemployment Rate Trend Comparison
1970-2013**



Source: TN Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development

Figure 3

Annually for 25 years, the McMinn County Economic Development Authority has hosted a day-long industry appreciation event. With industry participation declining at the day-long event, and with the Development Authority Board and staff understanding the lean and efficient environments of our manufacturers, a decision was made to change the format of how we show appreciation to our industries. Staff surveyed industries to see how they would like to be celebrated, and the results of the survey resulted in a dinner event. The Celebration of Industries Who Make it in McMinn held in conjunction with the Development Authority's annual membership meeting on June 26, 2014. The event offered a pre-dinner reception, dinner, door prizes, and awards. The speaker for the event was Vallie Smith Collins, Miracle on the Hudson, passenger. Photos of the event are included at the end of the annual report.



Figure 4 Vallie Collins, Key Note Speaker

As a way to recognize our existing industries, the McMinn County Economic Development Authority established the APEX Awards, which recognize industries and individuals for their **A**daptability, **P**erformance, and **EX**cellence in their industry or profession. Award categories and winners and sponsors were:

APEX Production Worker of the Year (sponsored by TCAT Athens)

James McCowan

Automatic Cover Line Operator
Thomas & Betts



APEX Professional of the Year (sponsored by TWC and MCEDA)

Melissa Tullock, Co-Recipient
Human Resource Manager
E&E Manufacturing

Kim Miller, Co-Recipient
Value Stream Manager
Thomas & Betts



APEX Environmental Steward of the Year (sponsored by The DPA)

Midlab, Inc.



APEX Distinguished Service Award (sponsored by Athens & Etowah Chambers)

Waupaca Foundry



APEX Innovator of the Year (sponsored by MCEDA)
Resolute Forest Products



The Development Authority assisted two box retailers that were looking in the Athens area by providing information on demographics, traffic counts, and site information. Staff also assisted property owners of the Prospect Hill, a multi-use development.

Staff exhibited at the first McMinn County Veteran's Expo to provide information to veteran's interested in starting their own business.

Executive Director was the keynote speaker at the Athens Downtown Business Association annual dinner.

Product Development

The McMinn County Economic Development Authority is focused on building an inventory of developable properties for present and future economic growth. Throughout the Southeast Tennessee region, McMinn County has the most industrial properties available for development, which strengthens our ability to attract new business locations. The Development Authority's Land Committee was reconvened in fiscal year 2014 to further identify sites to add to our existing inventory of properties, and to focus on preparing existing sites for development.

In addition to having available properties, we must have sites that have the necessary infrastructure and accessibility. Properties must be affordable with the ability to be developed quickly to meet companies' swift construction-to-production schedules. We learned with the H.P. Pelzer project that timing is everything, and in order to be competitive we must focus our efforts on pre-development activities.

With the location of H.P. Pelzer, the necessary infrastructure was extended to the Mt. Verd Industrial Park. Athens Utilities Board was instrumental in extending the utilities to serve H.P. Pelzer, and for future industrial uses at the park. The City of Athens was successful in applying for a Tennessee Department of Transportation State Industrial Access grant for the County Road 250 access to the park. Industrial Way now serves as the access to the park. The financial report, included herein, reflects the

participation of the Development Authority, Athens Utilities Board, City of Athens, and McMinn County in readying the site for development.



The North Etowah Industrial Park site was certified through the Select Tennessee Sites certification program in fiscal year 2014. The site was previously certified through CSX Select Sites certification process. These certifications display to prospects that the site has gone through an extensive vetting process, and that it meets the requirements for industrial end users. The City of Etowah, Etowah Utilities Board, McMinn County and Development Authority staff are continually focused on finding funding sources to exercise our option to purchase the property. Annexation proceedings were initiated on the property and will be finalized at the point when either the Development Authority or an end user purchases the property. Staff and McMinn County Highway Department personnel met with the TDOT Region 2 to further explore opportunities to create an industrial access to the site directly off of State Route 30. A new access from State Route 30 into the park will shorten the travel time to the interstate, and also eliminate the need to cross over a railroad crossing on Jack King Drive to access the site.

The Athens/McMinn Interstate Industrial Park went through the Select Tennessee Sites certification program. All due diligence that was required as part of the program was completed. The wetlands delineation study revealed 2.92 acres of wetlands and 3,794 feet of streams scattered throughout the heart of the property. Certification of the site was put on hold until a wetland and mitigation plan is completed. The City of Athens Public Works Department and Development Authority staff are looking at opportunities for mitigation of the site.

The extension of fiber to all of our industrial parks was completed as part of a federal Economic Development Administration grant. The grant was finalized as of June 2014. As part of the grant, it was required that the industrial parks have recorded Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions. The Board of Directors adopted declarations for each of the parks with the stipulation that they reserve the right to modify them at any time.

The Development Authority in coordination with the City of Athens, Athens Utilities Board and McMinn County, applied to become a TVA Sustainable Community. Sustainability has become important to a number of industries that are looking for new site locations. Part of the process was to identify all of our sustainable resources. TVA's consultants audited our sustainable inventory and designated Athens/McMinn County as a TVA Sustainable Silver community. A plan of action was developed to bring the community to gold status.



Staff coordinated a visit with a TVA Target Market Specialist, Tennessee Economic and Community Development staff, Volunteer Electric, Norfolk Southern and CSX on

a tour of site owned by Molpus Timberland in the South end of McMinn County. The tour was focused on evaluating properties owned by Molpus Timberland for mega site status. Sites were toured along the Hiwassee River and CSX rail line in addition to sites along Interstate 75. TVA did an extensive review of these sites along with a large parcel of land owned by Ross Tarver along Highway 163 in Calhoun. The reviews evaluated the sites for industrial use. The findings of the review outlined the pros of the sites as well as the challenges associated with them. The main challenges outlined in the review include the absence of sewer service to the area and the topographic challenges of the site. The property owners were given copies of the reviews.

Staff worked with the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce on bringing McMinn County into Foreign Trade Zone 134, which was approved in late fiscal year 2014.

Workforce Development

Workforce preparedness continues to be a priority of the Development Authority. Meetings with existing industries and prospective businesses continues to highlight the shortage of skilled labor. The 28th Annual Survey of Corporate Executives by Area Development Magazine, revealed that the availability of skilled labor is the number one site selection factor in today's economy. As manufacturing becomes more automated, advanced manufacturing skill sets are required. Staff spent time in fiscal year 2014 working with public officials, education partners, industry partners, and state and regional organizations on McMinn County's workforce development strategies.

In fiscal year 2014, staff co-hosted two Plant Manager Meetings with the Tennessee College of Applied Technology – Athens. These meetings are beneficial in collectively discussing industry needs in our community. The Ready to Work Program, Career Expo, Job Fair, and Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Business Innovation are all programs that have evolved from the Plant Manager's meeting.

Staff participated in the development of the Ready to Work Program. This program is the first of its kind in the State of Tennessee, and was modeled after a similar program in the State of Alabama. The inaugural class graduated in fiscal year 2014. The program consists of eight four-hour sessions taught over a four week period. Each session focuses on hard and soft skills necessary for productive



Figure 5 Inaugural Ready to Work Graduating Class

manufacturing team members. Sessions are taught by local training providers and industry professionals. The curriculum was created with the direction of local manufacturers, and with the assistance of the Tennessee College of Applied Technology Athens, The Tennessee Career Center, and McMinn County Adult Basic Education.



Promoting manufacturing as a career option has emerged as the needs for skilled manufacturing employees continue to rise. Staff was involved in programs that help to advance these career opportunities to our student and adult population. Executive

Director Kathy Knight and Don Kahler, Denso, served on the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry Education and Workforce Committee. Knight was the only economic developer in the State to serve on the committee. The committee worked to develop a new program Dream It. Do It. Tennessee (DiDiTN). DiDiTN's mission is to promote manufacturing as a career option to students across the State of Tennessee. The program has plans to roll out in fiscal year 2015. The committee also was involved in the Governor's Drive to 55 initiative. The initiative's mission is for 55% of the state population to have either a degree or certificate by 2025. Another focus was educating the committee on the Common Core curriculum. Another initiative focused on promoting manufacturing jobs to students.

The second annual McMinn County Career Expo was held on November 7, 2013. The Expo introduces local high school seniors to careers offered by our local industries and to training opportunities. The Development Authority was a co-sponsor for the event.



Figure 6 Job Fair

The second annual job fair was held at the Tennessee College of Applied Technology – Athens on July 31, 2013. The Development Authority was a co-sponsor of this event. Over 300 job seekers attended the Job Fair.

City of Athens Vice-Mayor Ann Davis hosted an afternoon dessert gathering at her home. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss workforce development initiatives with ladies in the community. Executive Director Knight spoke at the event.

The Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Business Innovation concept continues to evolve. The Development Authority continues to work with the local workforce development committee to see this concept mature into a reality. McMinn County secured a \$20,000 USDA Rural Development grant for a concept study. J. Holmes Architecture was secured by the County as the architect to complete the study. Staff participated in providing information on two Development Authority owned sites to

be evaluated for the Center's location. Staff also participated in focus group meetings with the architect, industries, and regional economic development individuals and groups. McMinn County also secured a \$200,000 Appalachian Regional Commission grant to be used for preliminary engineering.

Marketing

The focus of McMinn County Economic Development Authority's marketing efforts in fiscal year 2014 was brand and website development. The new log and brand "Make It In McMinn" offers an adaptable message that can span across different economic development programs. Brand recognition is essential to draw attention to McMinn County, Tennessee and to differentiate us from other communities. Site location consultants often mention community branding as a way to set yourself apart from your competitors.



With a new brand, the Development Authority developed a new website www.MakelItInMcMinn.org to effectively promote our business advantages, community assets and available industrial properties. The site was designed to be interactive for the end-user and includes a report builder for printing specific information from the site. A searchable properties database linked to TVAsites.com was integrated into the website to allow users to search for available industrial properties and buildings within McMinn County. This feature can be expanded to include commercial properties. The addition of commercial properties will be evaluated in the next fiscal year. Funding received from the Industrial Development Bond Board of McMinn County and a Governor's Three Star grant assisted with the development of the website.

Social media sites were set up on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube to keep friends, followers, and subscribers up-to-date on the McMinn County Economic Development Authority. A news feature was also included on the MakelItInMcMinn.org website to keep visitors to the site informed of positive news from the organization and community.

Staff made presentations at local civic groups and presented on economic development at the Museum Town Hall Meeting held at the Living Heritage Museum on April 4, 2014. Press releases and articles were written for local media outlets.

Internal marketing efforts were established to help keep our public funding entities and our partners up-to-date on activities of the organization. Monthly activity reports were sent to the public funding entities, and a quarterly partner's breakfast was

established. The breakfast is a way for our corporate partners to stay informed and to get questions answered. These activities will continue into fiscal year 2015.

Other direct marketing/recruiting activities have been described throughout the annual report.

Administrative & Professional Development

Fiscal Year 2014 brought about a lot of changes in the offices of the McMinn County Economic Development Authority. With all new staff at the helm, organization was key to having a successful year. Staff swiftly began organizing the office to understand the history of the organization, and the file structures. A digital file server was purchased and installed to better secure, and maintain electronic filings. Unstable internet problems were addressed and a new wireless network was installed. The Board of Directors adopted a records retention policy to allow staff to purge outdated and unusable documents and to make room for a more efficient organizational structure. Geographical Information Systems (GIS) software was purchased, so that staff can effectively, and timely respond to prospect inquiries using up-to-date mapping.

Financial recordkeeping was organized into electronic financial software, QuickBooks. Implementing QuickBooks has saved staff time while also giving the organization better financial accountability. Internal controls were established to assist with separate of accounting duties. Miller and McPhail retained the accounting contract for monthly financial reporting. As a result of serving as the Public Law 1101 Joint Economic and Community Development Board, the State of Tennessee Comptroller's Office required that the organization begin filing audits in accordance with the Government Auditing Standards. Proposals to audit the organization's financial records were sent out to auditing firms in the Chattanooga and Knoxville regions. Ingram, Overholt & Bean, P.C. was retained as the auditing firm for a three year contract. The financial audit revealed no findings.

The Development Authority was approved to become part of the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System. An actuarial study was completed and staff will be able to join the retirement system in fiscal year 2015. At that time, staff will also be eligible to become part of the State of Tennessee Local Government Health Benefits plan. Having a defined benefits plan is essential for staff retention.

Staff continued to be the administrative arm of the Industrial Development Bond Board of McMinn County and for the Governor's Three Star Program.

Staff development is an important part of the growth of any organization. It is important to stay abreast of industry trends. Development Authority staff participated in seminars, conferences, webinars, conference calls and trainings. The administrative assistant, Joni Walker, obtained QuickBooks training through the Small Business Development Center. Executive Director, Kathy Knight, participated in:

- 
- Governor’s Conference on Economic Development
 - Governor’s Three Star Regional Meeting (hosted in Athens)
 - Leadership McMinn
 - Tennessee Economic Development Authority Fall Conference and Day on the Hill
 - Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry Effects of Unionization
 - Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Energy and Environmental Conference
 - Tennessee Valley Corridor National Summit
 - TVA Economic Development Forum
 - TVA Request for Information Regional Training (hosted in Athens and attended by all staff members)
 - USDA Rural Development Conference

The McMinn County Economic Development Authority and staff maintained professional memberships and affiliations in national, regional, state, and local organizations and civic groups. Following are a list of affiliations:

- Athens Kiwanis Club
- Greater Athens Human Resource Association
- International Economic Development Council
- International Council of Shopping Centers
- Local Workforce Investment Area 5 Board of Directors
- Southern Economic Development Council
- Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- Tennessee College of Applied Technology-Athens General Advisory Committee
- Tennessee Economic Development Council
- Tennessee Wesleyan Business Advisory Committee
- Tri-State Regional Workforce Alliance
- Watts Bar Community Action Panel
- Ex-Officio Board Member of:
 - Athens Area Chamber of Commerce
 - Etowah Area Chamber of Commerce

Organization Information

Organization Leadership

OFFICERS

Durant Tullock, President

Stuart Sullins, Vice President
Thom Johnson, Treasurer
Sidney Breaux, Past President

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Gentry
David Crews
Dick Pelley
Bob Lambert
Eric Newberry
Art Kimball
Dan Scherle
Mike Whitmire
David Alley
Joe Holbrook
Rhonda Whaley
Will Estes

Jason McConkey
Jim Wilson
Shane Sewell
Chris Webb
Rob Preston
Stewart Smith

Ex-officio (non-voting)

Matt Gravley
Mitchell Moore
Senator Mike Bell
Representative John Forgety

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Organization Membership

Corporate Partners	Athens Federal Community Bank BB&T Citizens National Bank The Daily Post Athenian Denso Manufacturing	First Volunteer Bank Regions Bank SouthEast Bank Starr Regional Medical Center Thomas & Betts
Sustaining Members	Bargain Barn/ UGO FSG Bank Hiwassee Builders Supply Holston Gases, Inc. Johns Manville Mayfield Dairy Farms	Partners Development Resolute Forest Products Smith Funeral Home Waste Connections Waupaca Foundry
General Members	AT&T Athens Area Chamber of Commerce Athens City Board of Education Athens Housing Authority Athens Insurance Athens Mini Storage Bluegrass Materials Bordwine Funeral Home Carter, Harrod, & Willhite PPLC City of Niota Comcast Cable Consolidate Metco (ConMet) Creative Foam Corp. Davis Home by Hackney Home Furnishings Dillard Construction Company E&E Manufacturing East Tennessee Industrial Warehouse Edward Jones Etowah Area Chamber of Commerce Hacker Sign Company Heil Trailer International J&D Marcus, LLC (Jackson Street Warehouse) Lay Realty Company	Manufacturers Industrial Group Maxwell Industries McKinney Excavating Merit Construction Montvue Development Co., LLC Moore Discount, Inc. Miller & McPhail, CPA, PPLC Riley Consultants S&ME Seaton Enterprises Selective Structures Southern Hydraulic Cylinder Springbrook Golf & Country Club Sullins Family Eye Care Clinics Sweetwater Valley Oil Company TCAT - Athens Tennessee Wesleyan College Town of Englewood Valley Title Webb Plumbing, Heating & Electric Wholesale Supply Group, Inc. Ziegler Funeral Home

Industry Day & Annual Meeting Photos





A special thanks to all of our funding entities, our partners and our members for helping us to have a successful year!

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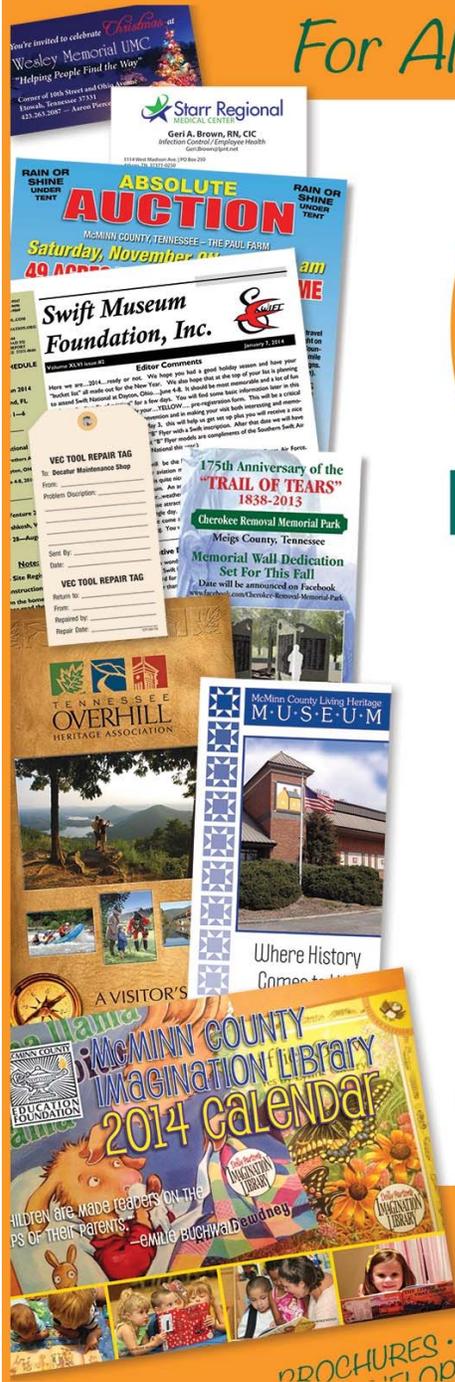
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