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## Executive Director's Report

*From the desk of G.C. Hixson ...*



### Why Does Layoffs/Downsizing Occur? Why is our Community Changing?

The one constant thing in life (and in economic development) is change. This was certainly true last quarter as employers announced recent work reductions and realignments in Wilson County. Many questioned why this occurred as well as what are we as a community going to do. In regards to why these events occur there are a number of reasons that usually center around reducing production costs, corporate changes, or basically pressures brought on from a world economy. The question then is how do we address the issues which lead to these decisions?

In the economic development field, companies represent the demand side of the equation while communities represent the location and the talent side. In today's economy, talent is becoming the driving force behind today's closings, expansions and location selections. Many predict that the demand for talent will far exceed the supply and that the gap between jobs and talent will become one of the top three challenges of this century. (The other two factors include reducing fixed operating costs and instituting innovation.) So what does this have to do with losing jobs in Wilson County? It means that if we are to be successful in maintaining our base and to be competitive in the information-based, talent-driven economy we must distinguish ourselves apart in the talent field. We must be able to ensure companies can find, hire, and retain the talent they need. In light of the recent reductions, that is exactly what we are doing as we promote the skills and attributes of those employees affected by management decisions.

Wilson County possesses the physical infrastructure requirements of roads, schools, airports, hospitals, etc. that companies require to grow and to locate. These attributes however are just the opening bid. The school systems in Wilson County and post secondary institutions in the area can meet the talent demands but every effort must be made to continue and improve these programs. In a global workplace where work is ongoing 24 hours a day seven days a week all 52 weeks each year, "talent" will be the item which will keep us from experiencing the events of last quarter.

## Wilson County Receives Tennessee Three-Star Certification

Governor Phil Bredesen and ECD Commissioner Matthew Kisber presented Wilson County the Three-Star award at a recognition ceremony as part of the recent Governor's Conference on Economic and Community Development. The program must receive annual certification from the governor by achieving strategic economic goals. Certification as a Three-Star community involves reaching a variety of benchmarks in organizational, community, business, education and work force development categories.



## ICSC TN/KY Idea Exchange

Louisville Kentucky was this years host to over 700 attendees for the International Council of Shopping Centers Tennessee/Kentucky Idea Exchange Alliance Program. The Alliance Program is an initiative designed to create educational and networking opportunities for retail real estate professionals including developers, retailers, brokers and consultants, as well as public officials, economic developers and planners.

Sessions included "Retail Focused Economic Development, Measuring Market Potential in Underserved Urban Markets, Investment/Capital Markets, Zoning Challenges in Today's Market, Benefits and Challenges of Mixed-Use Developments and the Local Decision Process".

A popular part of the program is the "Meet the Retailers Update". A panel of 21 retailers presented their business and expansion plans for Kentucky, Tennessee and the Southeast.

The JECDB was one of one hundred eight exhibitors in the "Dealmaking" portion of the program. Dianne Fletcher serves as the ICSC Tennessee State Alliance Co-Chair from the Public Sector.

The 2008 Tennessee/Kentucky Idea Exchange will be held in Nashville, July 17 & 18.

### Mt. Juliet has new City Manager



Randy E. Robertson

As of September 24th Randy Robertson came on board as Mt. Juliet's City Manager. Mr. Robertson was the former City Manager of Ashland, Kentucky. Mr.

Robertson served almost thirty years with the U.S. Army as an officer and senior civil servant.

Mr. Robertson holds a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Master's in Public Service, both from Western Kentucky University. He also has a Master's of Science in Strategic Studies from the Army War College, and a Master's of Science in Urban Planning from The Johns Hopkins University. He holds two Certificates of Advances Graduate Studies, one in Education from Boston University and the other in Healthcare Administration from Central Michigan University. Randy is also a graduate of Syracuse University's Advanced Resource Manager's Program and was selected as a Harvard University Senior Executive Fellow in 2003. He has served as Adjunct Faculty with several colleges and universities in the United States and Europe.

Randy's wife Darlene is also a former federal civil servant and a retired Lieutenant Colonel with the U.S. Army. They have two adult sons, Courtney and Tyler who both reside in Washington, D.C.

Randy will serve on the JECDB Board of Directors and the Executive Committee.

### New Holiday Inn Express coming to Mt. Juliet

Construction has begun on the new state-of-the-art Holiday Inn Express in Mt. Juliet at 565 South Mt. Juliet Road. The hotel is expected to open in the spring of 2008. The hotel will feature 82 guest rooms, free high-speed internet access, a free breakfast bar, indoor pool, fitness center and a large business conference center.



The conference center is expected to have approximately 1,300 square feet of flexible meeting space. The hotel will be equipped with the most current technology to help their guests business needs. The Holiday Inn Express is being built by Integrity Investments. Justin Patel is Integrity Investments president and owner of the new hotel.

### Olive Garden scheduled to open October 22nd

The new Olive Garden at Providence Marketplace is slated to open October 22. The Tuscan style restaurant is 7,399 square feet. The new restaurant will seat 247 guests and will employ approximately 165.



### Did You Know . . . . .

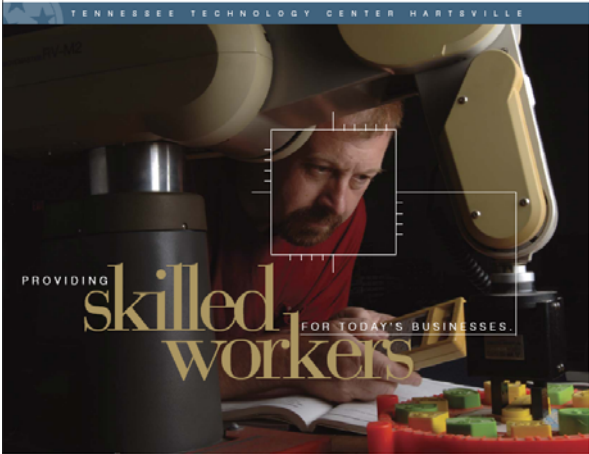
	Wilson Co.	Tennessee
Population Estimate for 2006	104,035	6,038,803
Population percent change, April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2006	17.1%	6.1%
Persons under 5 yrs. old, percent, 2005	6.4%	6.5%
Persons under 18 yrs. Old, percent, 2005	24.1%	23.3%
Persons 65 yrs. Old and over, percent, 2005	10.2%	12.6%
Female persons, percent, 2005	50.5%	51.0%

(Source: U.S. Census Bureau)

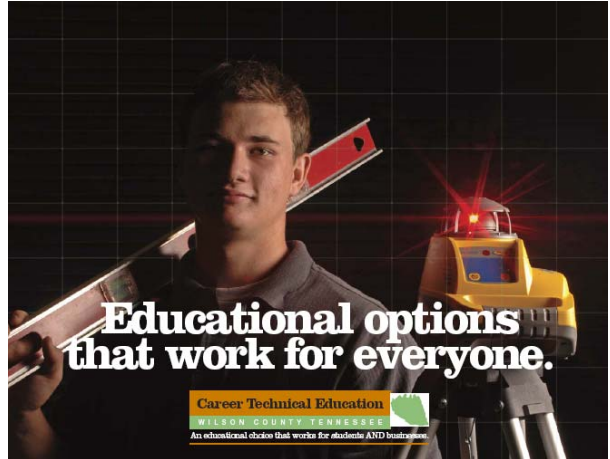
# Educational Brochures

## JECDB and partners produce Marketing Items

Any successful community requires a workforce that can meet the demands of its employers. In an effort to demonstrate that Wilson County meets these requirements, the JECDB teamed up with two of its educational institutions by telling the "local story". The JECDB teamed with Mr. Bill Moss, Director of the Career Technical Center of the Wilson County Board of Education and with Ms. Mae Banks, Director of The Tennessee Technology Center at Hartsville. The coordination resulted in



the production of the two pictured marketing pieces. Both pieces were designed to be used by the educational institutions in recruiting students into their unique and demanded programs while the JECDB would use the materials with prospects and their marketing programs.



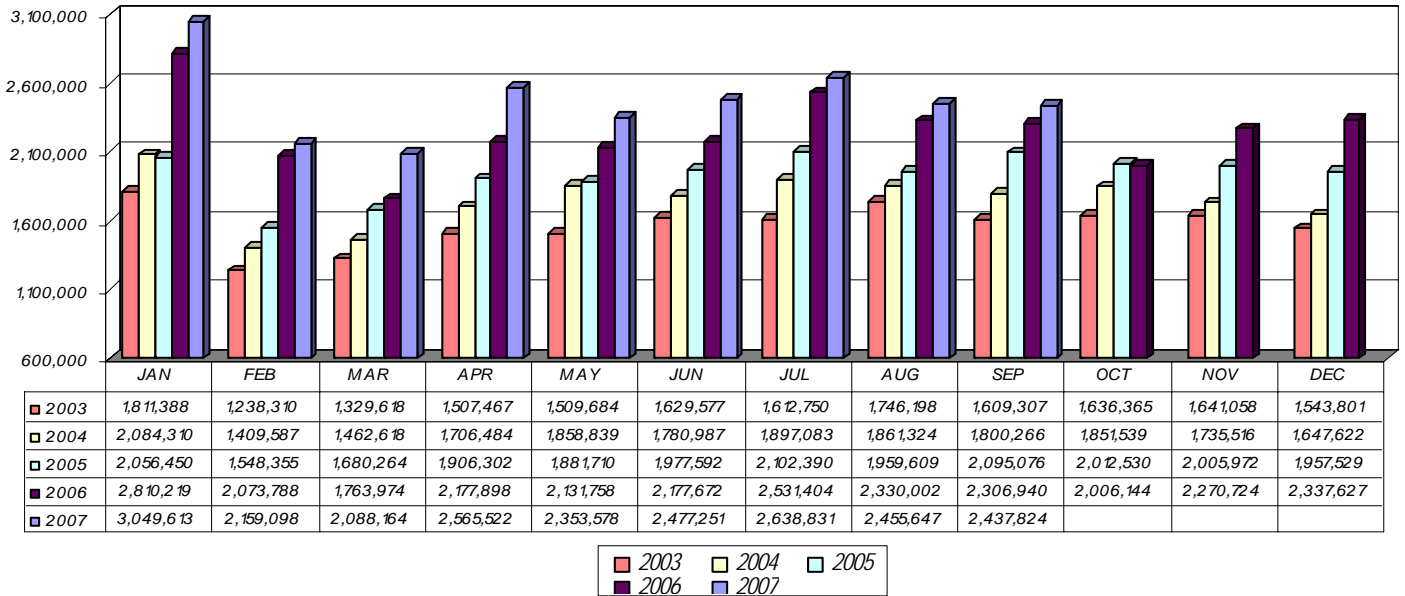
All photos used in the marketing pieces were of Wilson County students and Tennessee Technology Students at Hartsville. The brochures were produced in conjunction with CanineCreative, a Wilson County firm. Copies of the pieces can be obtained at either the educational facilities or at the JECDB office.

### WILSON COUNTY

(includes Watertown, Lebanon, Mt. Juliet)

Local Options Sales Tax Revenue Collections for 2003 - 2007

(Source: Tennessee Department of Revenue) (Prepared by: JECDB of Wilson County)



# Spotlight on Industry

## PROSPECT, INC.

Providing Quality Packaging and Assembly Services for over 20 years

The mission of Prospect, Inc. is to provide support services and employment to people who have disabilities or other barriers to personal independence. Programs offered include: Adult Day Services, Job Training and Placement, Families First, Residential Services, Family Support, and Child Development/Early Intervention.

The agency provides packaging and fulfillment services for various businesses and industries including: shrink wrapping, poly-bagging, display assembly, collating, small parts assembly, mail services, product packaging, salvage, quality inspection, distribution services, warehousing, inventory and shipping. Prospect, Inc. partners with industries to provide additional materials and services; i.e. cartons, displays, bags, and printed materials.

Prospect, Inc. has a workforce of 130 in Wilson County with a total of 270 employees throughout Middle Tennessee. The agency's work centers are located in Wilson, Smith, and DeKalb Counties.

To find out more about Prospect, Inc. and the services offered, you may visit the agency's website at [www.prospectinc.com](http://www.prospectinc.com) or call 615.444.0597. Prospect, Inc. is located at 960 Maddox Simpson Parkway in Lebanon, Tennessee.



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