

## From the Executive Director

It is my pleasure to present to you your new newsletter *Developments*. Since becoming the director of your Foundation, one of my goals has been to improve communication with all our members. It's my hope that this newsletter—which is intended to be a monthly publication—will be a significant step in that direction.

In fact, although you may have seen them earlier on the website, I would like to share with you again my initial objectives and goals as I began to serve as your executive director:

1. Assess real estate needs to enhance the recruitment of potential new enterprises:
  - Determine the location, size, and status (zoning) of all properties currently belonging to SCEDD.
  - Secure changes in status (zoning) of such properties as needed.
  - Assure that all such properties are correctly listed on relevant websites.
  - Determine if additional real estate is needed.
  - Determine if existing District properties are essential to meet goals and objectives.
2. Improve the economic well-being and quality of life in our communities by assisting existing business and industry in developing and prospering as they grow incomes and the tax base.
3. Become effective advocate for strong, quality schools
4. Involve community leaders, organizations and stakeholders in a comprehensive approach to realistic, positive change that results in improved communications, common goals and strategies.
5. Maintain a strong, effective Council of Governments to strengthen relationships and continuity in goals and planning.
6. Reinforce our current membership by hosting and promoting training and development and by understanding the needs of all and determine if the Foundation can assist.
7. Conduct an aggressive membership campaign to insure more involvement and a direct investment in economic and community development.
8. Conduct targeted industrial, commercial, and retail recruitment.
9. Partner, network, and foster working relationships with other professional economic and community development organizations.
10. Work closely with State and Federal agencies which may assist us in achieving our goals.
11. Maintain an "Open Door" policy.



**Developments:**  
*The Newsletter of  
The Simpson County  
Development Foundation*

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**Donnie Caughman**

Executive Director





In December 2015, Director Donnie Caughman attended the Mississippi Development Council's Pacesetter Tour, at which he received information concerning MEDC's proposed transportation plan for the state. Called *Excelerate Mississippi*, the proposal is a vision of what's ahead in the state regarding traffic, road and bridges and the desperate need for repair, maintenance, and construction. "While traffic is up 90%, inflation is up over 100% and construction costs are up over 200%. Meanwhile, gas consumption (the key ingredient for providing road funds) has been essentially flat, growing by only 1.6% since 1987", according to the report. This plan has been submitted to the State Legislature for consideration.



**Dr. Shannon Campbell makes presentation to recent meeting of the Officers and Directors of the Simpson County Development Foundation.**

Dr. Shannon Campbell, Director of the Trent Lott National Center for Excellence in Economic Development and Entrepreneurship at the University

of Southern Mississippi meet with the SCDF Board of Directors on February 18, 2016, to discuss ways the University can partner with SCDF in developing strategic planning, workforce development, retention and expansion of business and other related matters.

In the area of workforce analysis and development, Dr. Campbell noted that the greatest need currently in Mississippi is for mid-level skilled workers. She emphasized the importance of the WorkKeys® assessment and certification, administered in Mississippi as the Mississippi Community College Board's Career Readiness Certificate.

"Skilled trades are the number one occupation shortage in the United States", James Williams, Executive Director, State Workforce Investment Board.



House Bill 868, in the State House of Representatives, proposes revising boundaries of the three Supreme Court Districts in the state in effect changing the Mississippi Department of Transportation districts and Public Service Commissioner's districts. If this becomes law, Simpson County would be in the central district.

Remember to visit our website regularly

-- [www.simpsoncounty.biz](http://www.simpsoncounty.biz)

## The Simpson County Development Foundation

Cordially Invites You

To

## The 37th Annual Membership Meeting

On Thursday, the Twenty-first of April  
Two Thousand and Sixteen

Beginning at Half Past Six in the Evening

Historic Sanitorium Dining Hall - Building 7  
Boswell Regional Center  
1049 Simpson Highway 149  
Magee, Mississippi

Featured Speaker  
Mike Monk, CEO

Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

**Planning underway for 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Membership Meeting.** The 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Membership Meeting is being planned now. The guest speaker for the event will be Mr. Mike Monk, CEO, CMPPD. The dinner will be a sit-down dinner served in the beautiful and historic dining hall on the campus of Boswell Regional Center. Tickets will be \$20 each. *Members will receive an invitation and ticket order form closer to the meeting date.*



**In recognition of the Simpson County health Care Zone Master Plan, the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) has presented the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District and the Simpson County Economic Development District is 2015 Innovation Award, which is given for innovative approaches to regional economic and community development.** CMPDD CEO Mike Monk presented the award at the January 2016 meeting of the Simpson County Development Foundation officers and directors. He noted that SCEDD's award was only one of seven nationally in the area of Aging, Health, and Human Services. SCDF Executive Director Donnie Caughman accepted the award on behalf of the District. Also attending from CMPDD were David Wade, Gray Ouzts, and Don Smith.



Left to Right: James Smith, Chairman, SCEDD; Brandon Hubbard, Past President, SCDF; John Rankin, President, SCDF; Mike Monk, CEO, CMPDD; Donnie Caughman, Executive Director, SCDF; Gray Ouzts, AICP, CMPDD; David Wade, AICP, CMPDD.

Photo Credit: Pat Smith, Magee Courier/Simpson County News.

**Recent appointments made to fill expiring terms for Trustees of the Simpson County Economic Development District.** On February 12, 2016, the Simpson County Board of Supervisors reappointed for new terms: Fountaine McNair – District 1, Danny Moseley – District 4, and David Massey – District 5. In addition, two new members were appointed: Chris Bowen – District 2 and Brian Daniels – District 3.

### Organizational News

- Your officers and directors continue to meet monthly on the third Thursday of each month. The calendar for the remainder of the year is as follows:

- March 17
- April 21 ANNUAL MEETING
- May 19
- June 16 Final Meeting of FY 2016
- July 21 First Meeting of FY 2017  
& New Officers Assume Duties

- August 8
- September 15
- October 20
- November 17
- December NO Meeting

Meeting time is at 10:00 a.m., and the meeting place is announced in advance of each meeting—the usual rotation is as follows: Peoples Bank, Magee; PriorityOne Bank, Magee; Trustmark Bank, Magee; Pioneer Health Services, Magee.

- The following committees have been named and are at work:  
**Membership Committee:** Ashley Jones (Chair), Lori McAlpin, Malory Yelverton, Jacob Blakeney, and Donnie Caughman.  
**Healthcare Zone Facilitating Committee:** Stan Bulger (Chair), Dr. Dewayne Middleton, Faith Kennedy, Cindy McIntyre, Randall Neely, Todd Booth, Jimmy Clyde, Lori McAlpin, Andy Gibson, and Donnie Caughman.
- Appropriate committees are also at work to provide the Nominations Report for 2016 Annual Meeting and to make selections for the Business of the Year Award and the Ally of the Year Award to be announced and presented at the meeting.
- All properties belonging to the Simpson County Economic Development District have been identified and logged in the SCDF office, including legal descriptions, maps, and recommendations for disposition.
- Membership Event:** In October 2015, we jointly offered with the Magee and Mendenhall Area Chambers of Commerce an E-Commerce Seminar *Doing Business in the Digital Age—Start and Grow Your Business On Line*. Presented by Dr. James Barnes and Dr. Roberto Gallardo of MSU, the seminar was well received. We plan to offer further such events that our members will find not only enjoyable but relevant and profitable, as well. *A special thanks to Southern Pine EPA, who sponsored the event.*