

## HAGOOD NAMED 2003 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Charles Hagood, Managing Partner and Founding Principal of The Access Group, has been named Volunteer of the Year for 2003 by TIDC.

The Access Group, LLC, headquartered in Hendersonville, is a single source engineering, project management, and plant relocation firm, has been named a Future 50 company on a number of occasions by the Tennessean newspaper and has been ranked as one of the fastest growing private companies in the mid-state region by Business Nashville Magazine.

Charles was instrumental in the formation of Forward Sumner, a county wide initiative that is already making a positive impact upon the economic growth of Sumner County.

Charles assisted in the recruitment of various companies and businesses to the area and is the current Chairman Elect of Forward Sumner. Charles also works tirelessly around the U.S. with client companies during the site selection process and analysis of relocating or expanding their operations.

In addition to an active involvement with TIDC, Charles spends countless hours serving his community in a variety of other volunteer capacities. Charles is a member of



*Charles Hagood, second from left, was presented the TIDC Volunteer of the Year award by TIDC president Randy Brewer, Mike Kopp, Assistant Commissioner for ECD, and Marco Oliveri, President and CEO of Forward Sumner.*

the Hendersonville Rotary Club, and is a past member of the Economic and Industrial Development Board in his community. He was chosen in 2001 by Tennessee Governor Don Sundquist to represent the Horizon Network of Young Business Leaders. He also serves on the Board of Directors for both the YMCA and United Way. Charles' other interests include serving his local youth soccer program, the Mid-Tenn Futbol Club, as President/Chairman of the Board, and serving his church as a Sunday School Director and Chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee.

Charles was honored at the TIDC conference and was presented the award by TIDC president Randy Brewer.



by Deb Woolley, President, Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry

With the January legislative session looming closer and closer, now is the time to talk with legislators at home and lay the groundwork for next year's successes.

It won't be an easy year in which to succeed.

First and foremost is the simple fact that much was left pending after the 2003 session – the first of the two-year session. Legislative focus last session was on the new administration and its leadership, the budget challenges, and a well-deserved honeymoon period after four years of income tax battles.

But it leaves a lot to be done.

The budget must be passed. Revenues are still low, and needs are high. After half a decade of tight budget years, pent-up demand for new services, program increases and raises is high. And, equally important, 2004 is an election year.

While we must continue to play defense against the bills introduced last year that will further damage our business climate, we must also enact some legislation that will address some of the problems we face.

At the top of the list must be legislation to address the costs of our workers' compensation system.

While Tennessee appears on the surface to be a middle-cost state, rates do not tell the true story. Instead, our judicial-based system, combined with its method for handling permanent partial disability (PPD) claims, drives costs up and jobs away.

Tennessee's PPD system, according to the Workers' Compensation Research Institute, results in a "...higher frequency of PPD and much higher PPD payments per claim raise costs."

In a 2003 study by WCRI comparing 12 states (including the regional states of Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Illinois, Texas and North Carolina), the study concluded:

- The average total cost per claim in Tennessee was 6 percent higher than other states in the study.
- The average total cost of a similar claim with more than seven days of lost time was 15 percent above the median of the 12 states.
- Lump sum settlements are more frequent in Tennessee and the average settlement was among the highest of the 12 states.

*Continued on page 3*



## Collaboration Is The Key To Success In Economic Development

**Commissioner  
MATT KISBER**

"People who work together will win, whether it be against complex football defenses, or the problems of modern society."

This inspirational message delivered by legendary football coach Vince Lombardi reflects a fundamental philosophy I adhere to at ECD. It is my sincere belief that the key to success in economic development is getting people to work together toward a common goal.

Putting this philosophy into practice is not always easy. Since I began my tenure as ECD commissioner I heard from many economic development professionals from around the country who warned me about the competitive nature of this business, and what they view as the pitfalls of collaboration.

The Governor and I, however, see things differently.

In one of his first official acts as Governor, Phil Bredesen issued an executive order creating a Jobs Cabinet within his Administration made up of all the key players in and around state government who have responsibility for job growth, job retention and community development. His act sent a signal that this Administration was placing a high value on collaboration among parties who were in pursuit of a common goal.

One of those key players brought to the Jobs Cabinet table was TIDC, which is ably represented by Randy Brewer.

The results speak for themselves. I can honestly say that there has never been a stronger working relationship between state agencies and outside entities who share a common goal. Together we have collaborated successfully to bring a number of major industries to our state, and have worked together to convince a number of other major companies to re-invest in our state.

*Continued on page 3*

## Legislative Agenda (cont'd)

WCRI looked at trends from the timeframe from 1997/1998 to 1999/2000 and found that report for Tennessee is getting worse, not better. Employers and employees alike are paying the price.

The external research, combined with reports from employers of higher and higher workers' compensation costs and reports from economic developers of companies choosing to locate in other states because of workers' comp costs, tell us that it is an issue that must be addressed now.

The Governor recognizes the situation and, in speaking to the business community at the Tennessee Chamber's annual meeting last spring, committed to workers' comp reform. It can't happen too soon.

Economic development professionals across the state can cite incidences where location or expansion decisions were influenced by Tennessee's

costly workers' comp system. They know about jobs that have been lost and jobs that never came. Workers' comp reform doesn't come easily. It is always a battle, and one that seems to occur only every five years or so. The last major reform occurred in 1996, and we can't wait any longer.

Traditional foes of workers' comp reform such as organized labor and trial lawyers will be ready to fight. Political strategists will be advising elected officials to avoid the issue in an election year.

We can't let that happen. If we want to see Tennessee's economy grow, if we want to see jobs created, if we want to see our employees and employers treated fairly, we must have workers' comp reform. As economic development professionals, each of you is on the front line of job creation. Helping fight the battle for workers' comp reform might be one of the most important steps you can take.

## Collaboration (cont'd)

*by Matt Kisber, ECD Commissioner*

At Governor Bredesen's direction, the Jobs Cabinet has traveled together with the Governor to counties in all three grand divisions to hear first hand from local leaders about the challenges facing our regional economies. Listening, learning and collaborating on solutions to needs is the Governor's mandate to his Jobs Cabinet.

I have also been working to put this philosophy of collaboration to work in all of our department's partnerships and throughout the divisions and programs we manage and administer.

This fall we will be rolling out a new focus on the state's incentive packages to stimulate job growth that is the result of sharing of ideas between many of our department's partners.

We also are rolling out new programs to provide collaborative resources and assistance to small

businesses, to companies committed to technology job growth, and other existing industries.

None of these new programs or initiatives would be coming to fruition without having key resources in state government and in the private sector working closely together.

That is why I place such a high value on continuing a strong working relationship with TIDC. This organization's mission is closely aligned with the mission of ECD and this Administration.

In the months to come I look forward to sharing, collaborating and working together with each of you to seize the opportunities before us for job growth, job retention and community development.

I have no doubt that great things will come of our efforts.

**Mark Your Calendars:**

TIDC /TCCE/ECD Legislative Reception  
Downtown Nashville  
February 18, 2004

## It's A Great Time To Be A Member of TIDC

By Randy Brewer, TIDC President 2003-2004



Congratulations to TIDC Vice-president Kim Denton, our Board of Directors and all of our members who helped make the Fall Conference in Memphis informative and successful.

I'm gratified to see the tremendous emphasis that is being placed on retention and expansion of existing business and industry. From Governor Bredesen and his Jobs Cabinet, to the Tennessee Business Services staff at ECD, to TVA, to the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the focus is on our existing companies.

Our Thursday morning program at Fall Conference featured Eric Canada of Blane Canada Ltd. who gave a great presentation entitled Retention in a Recruitment World. More information about improving your R & E efforts can be found on Blane Canada's website at [www.blanecanada.com](http://www.blanecanada.com).

Another encouraging presentation was a 2004 Economic Outlook by Walter Hellwig of Union Planters Investment Advisers. Hellwig reported a number of economic indicators giving evidence of an impending upturn in the economy.

Other presentations included a legislative update by Deb Woolley of the Tennessee Chamber and Commerce, a report on the Tennessee Economic Partnership's marketing activities by Frank Tamberrino, a report on the upcoming SEDC conference at Hilton Head by Bob Grimes, a TVA economic development update by John Bradley and ECD Commissioner Matt Kisber's report on initiatives underway in his department.

I hope all of our members who aren't already Tennessee Chamber members will join and help that organization become an even more effective lobbyist for our business community. A huge issue next spring will be Workers Compensation reform, an issue important to our individual companies and to the overall perception of Tennessee's business climate. The Tennessee Chamber needs economic development professionals' support in proposing legislation that is fair and equitable to both employers and employees.

Commissioner Kisber's remarks were focused on the outstanding work of his new Creative Services department, headed by Asst. Commissioner Mike Kopp. Commissioner Kisber invited individual communities to contact Creative Services for assistance on development of marketing material that will not only be attractive but cost effective and designed to mesh with the state's marketing themes.

It was also exciting to hear John Bradley's review of the steps TVA is taking to generate business prospects and to provide incentives for them to move to the Valley.

As always, TEP is doing great work in supplementing the state's marketing efforts thanks to the generosity of dozens of public and private sector investors who provide funding.

I believe our members who don't attend our conferences are missing out on a wealth of information and great networking opportunities. During our Friday morning business meeting, a spirited discussion was held concerning the spring conference that has been held for the past several years in Destin, Florida.

TIDC membership is currently being surveyed in regard to all of our meetings including both spring and fall conferences and the legislative reception each February. The Board of Directors will gather our members' opinions and make decisions we hope will continue to improve TIDC's ability as an organization to offer meaningful services to its members.

Meanwhile, thanks to all of our members and our economic development partners who made the Memphis conference a huge success.

On a final happy note, Ray Whitlow, Director of the Paris/Henry Co. Economic Development team is back at work part-time and feeling fine after suffering a heart attack at the fall conference and undergoing an angioplasty and insertion of a stent. His long-term prognosis is excellent and we're glad he's doing well.

# Fall Conference Wrap-Up

Members gathered at the Radisson Hotel in downtown Memphis for networking and the fast paced information sessions that filled the agenda at the TIDC 2003 Fall Conference.

The fall conference, held September 17-19, presented a wide range of opportunities. About 150 members sat in on sessions with Eric Canada with Blane Canada Ltd. Thursday's morning session focused on business retention and expansion.

Updates on numerous projects and industry groups, including TVA, TCCI, SEDC, and ECD were attended by members. A economic outlook for 2004 was presented by Walter Hellwig with Union Planters Bank. Socializing punctuated the productive business agenda. Cocktails and meals were enjoyed together and golfers teed off at Galloway Golf Course.

Congratulations to Charles Hagood, named TIDC Volunteer of the Year. Mr. Hagood was recognized for the gift of his time and talent to furthering the economic progress of Tennessee. The honorees were recognized at a special dinner Thursday evening.

As the TIDC continues to grow, our conferences have become bigger and better. Make plans and mark your 2004 calendars for the TIDC Spring Conference. We're looking forward to seeing you there.

**Thank you to all of the corporate sponsors who once again made the conference a success:**

Gresham, Smith & Partners  
The Access Group  
West Tennessee Industrial Development Association  
Greater Cumberland County Chamber of Commerce  
Joseph W. Henrick  
Centex Engineering  
Doster Construction  
Lauderdale Co. Economic & Community Dev. Board  
Memphis Regional Chamber of Commerce  
Memphis Light Gas & Water  
Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce  
Jackson Energy Authority  
H & M Construction  
Knoxville Area Chamber of Commerce  
Askew, Hargraves, Harcourt & Associates  
Clarksville Area Chamber of Commerce  
East Tennessee Economic Agency  
The Walker Companies  
Canadian National  
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T.W. Frierson  
Rentenbach Constructors

## Photo & Address Change Request

If your photograph doesn't currently appear in the TIDC photo directory or on the website, please forward a copy to Suzie Lusk at 611 Commerce Street, Suite 3030, Nashville, TN 37203.



Also, please remember to forward any changes in your contact information to [suzie.lusk@tnchamber.org](mailto:suzie.lusk@tnchamber.org).

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