



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Economic Development Group Holds First East Tennessee Regional Meeting

Tennessee Industrial Development Council, a professional association for those involved in economic development, held a regional meeting at the Knoxville Area Chamber Partnership in Knoxville. The January 25th meeting was the first East Tennessee regional meeting of the statewide organization that for 39 years has promoted economic development initiatives and aided the professional development of its members.

“TIDC is strengthening all aspects of its economic development platform and will continue to provide more services, such as this meeting, to our members,” said Kyle Spurgeon, current TIDC president. Spurgeon is Vice President of Customer Service for Jackson Energy Authority and has had a long career in economic development.

“We have introduced regional meetings to address regional concerns and to allow our members easier access to updates on issues affecting economic development and to professional development between statewide meetings. The people at the forefront of bringing jobs to our communities in a global competition need this type of networking and reinforcement.”

At the opening of the meeting, Tonia Williams, the Tennessee Program Specialist for the US Department of Commerce-Economic Development Administration (EDA) spoke about the programs and assistance the EDA can provide for the East Tennessee Region. In 2005, EDA provided \$3.5 million in Tennessee for economic programs. \$1.3 million of this went to the University of Tennessee.

Kazumi Lino, Business Advisor from the Japan External Trade Organization, provided insight on how Tennessee companies can establish operations in Japan and develop international ties. Also speaking to the group was David Keim, Business Editor for the Knoxville News Sentinel, who provided tips on how to work with the local media on economic development issues.

The event was sponsored by the J.E. Crain & Son, Blaine Construction, and the Jefferson County Chamber. All are long time members of TIDC.

Doug Lawyer, Secretary-Treasurer for the TIDC, who serves as the Director of Economic Development for the Knoxville Area Chamber Partnership, coordinated the regional meeting. "We were extremely pleased with the turnout and level of participation for this meeting. Our presenters really gave our members a lot of useful insight."

A West Tennessee regional TIDC meeting was held January 19, 2006 in Martin, TN. A Middle Tennessee regional meeting was held on December 07, 2005 in Manchester, TN.

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