



MORGAN COUNTY, ALABAMA  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION



# 2012-2013 Annual Report



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# New & Expanding Industry in Morgan County

During fiscal year 2012-2013, October 2012 to September 2013, Morgan County had 8 non-confidential expansions and 15 confidential expansions or equipment upgrades announced for a total of **\$316,042,141** and **341 new jobs**. Due to confidentiality, some jobs and investment figures are not included individually, but the final totals reflect all.

Morgan County is a consistent leader in Alabama in existing industry expansion and is currently home to approximately 150 industries, including 14 Fortune 500 companies and nine Global 500 companies. Based on MCEDA's 2012 calendar year numbers, the Alabama Department of Commerce ranked Morgan County #2 in the State for expanding investment and #4 for overall new & expanding investment.

**3M** announced in September their plans for an expansion estimated to cost \$11.2 million. The investment will add 13 new jobs and make improvements to existing facilities for the production of fine chemicals. 3M currently has 816 employees and an average of 71 contract employees working at the Decatur site.

**AlphaPet** announced in March a \$190,000,000 expansion at their Decatur site that will include the construction of a new building, new machinery, and the addition of 75 new jobs. The investment is being made to increase production of resin. AlphaPet currently has 125 employees.

**Busche** made the purchase of the existing facility from Emerson Climate Technologies located in Hartselle in October. The new company announced an additional investment of \$21,000,000 in December for new equipment. The new company announced the addition of 200 jobs with the investment. Currently Busche has 55 employees.

**Linde Gas's** \$14,900,000 expansion was announced and began earlier in 2013. The expansion was made to increase their capacity to produce hydrogen gas for several local industries. Completion for the project is scheduled for December. Linde Gas currently has 8 employees.

**Nichols Aluminum** also announced an expansion earlier this year. The company which finishes aluminum coils, started on their \$8,300,000 expansion in February 2013. The investment is being made for new treatment ovens for its facility. The ovens will replace ones installed in the 1950's and will produce a cleaner product that their customers demand. Nichols Aluminum currently has 110 employees.

**Pilgrim's Pride Corp.**, located in Falkville, had a \$4,500,00 investment this year that would help them with efficiency. The expansion made to the railroad now provides them with capabilities to receive 90 cars. Pilgrim's Pride Corp. currently has 25 employees.

**Russell Forest Products**, located in Hartselle, was established in 1979. The company added 8 jobs this year. Currently Russell Forest Products has 85 employees. The family-owned company produces lumber and plywood.

**Valley Rubber**, located in Falkville, made a \$1,600,000 expansion this year that added 30 jobs. They currently have 132 employees. The investment was made to purchase a 48,000 square foot building to add a production line of rail fasteners for light-rail transit systems.

## AlphaPet's \$190 Million Facility Expansion Adds 75 New Jobs



In March, Indorama announced a \$190 million expansion to the

Decatur AlphaPet facility that will create 75 new jobs. The expansion includes a new building and machinery.

AlphaPet manufactures materials used in plastic beverage containers. The new expansion will be capable of producing

approximately 500,000 tons of resin per year. After the expansion, the Decatur plant will have almost 200 employees.

Governor Robert Bentley and Secretary of Commerce Greg Canfield joined local and company officials at Decatur Country Club for the official announcement of the expansion plan. "Indorama choosing to expand is a compliment to the strong workforce we have here in Alabama," Bentley said.

Currently, AlphaPet is exploring different options for the technology selection. Preliminary bids for construction management have been sought and received but are pending upon the technology selection.

## National Guard taking over Wallace Center

In August, Governor Robert Bentley announced that approximately \$10 million in federal money will be used to turn the Lurleen B. Wallace Developmental Center on U.S. Highway 31 into a multi-state National Guard regional training site.

The facility, previously the state's first regional developmental center, has been vacant since 2003 and sits on 160 acres. Approximately \$1 million will be spent on demolition and \$9 million in construction over 4 years. The state will build barracks, a cafeteria, gym and a medical facility.

The area's National Guard currently is stationed on Beltline Road. That armory will get a \$4 million investment, also from federal money. Col. Dennis Butters, spokesman for the Guard, said there is a need for expanded training facilities in the area. Alabama has the sixth-largest Guard in the nation and is first per capita with more than 11,000 soldiers.



Governor Bentley at the Wallace Center.

## ULA Wins \$1.1B Contract / Successful Rocket Launches in 2013

2013 has been a very good year for United Launch Alliance, which has an 800-employee assembly plant in Decatur. In June ULA was awarded a \$1.1 billion contract by the U.S. Defense Department to build seven rockets by 2015. The rockets on order include four Atlas Vs and three Delta IVs. The rockets will launch satellites for the Air Force and the National Reconnaissance Office.



ULA's Atlas V rocket launching at Cape Canaveral in June. Delta IV Heavy featured on the cover. Photos courtesy of ULA.

In July, a ULA Atlas V rocket, built in Decatur, launched a mobile communications satellite for the U.S. Navy from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida. At 15,000 pounds, the MUOS-2 was the heaviest satellite launched aboard Atlas V. The satellite carries a UHF-band narrow band payload to provide links to mobile ground forces and ships operating in hard-to-reach areas.

In August, the 23 story tall ULA Decatur built Delta IV Heavy launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. The largest rocket in the country carried a satellite for the National Reconnaissance Office, which operates the nation's system of intelligence-gathering systems.

## Eva's Fatback Pig Project

What once was an emu plant in Eva is now a pork processing plant started by Jim 'N Nicks Barbeque founder, Nick Pihakis. The plant consists of a three phase process that revolves around heritage hogs, all with the motto to "Respect the Pig".

The plant is processing about 1,200 hogs per week but is not yet at full capacity. Production should increase as demand in the Jim 'N Nicks restaurants increases for the heritage pork as well as receiving approval and certification to ship pork to stores under a "Fatback" label.

The plant currently has 22 employees but they expect that number to grow as production increases and stores start stocking heritage pork.

## New & On the Move

### New Workforce Development Partnership Launched

With a need to address short term issues like skills assessment and training for trade and craft labor, as well as the need to address long term workforce development needs in this field, a group of industrial contractors and plant managers have come together to form North Alabama Workforce Development Alliance.

After a series of roundtable discussions in the spring and summer, a core group of contractors presented the idea to the community. Since this meeting, a board of directors has been created and articles of incorporation are in progress.

The group is currently working on establishing a budget, funding sources and hiring an executive director for the initiative. In addition, plans are underway to launch a consistent skills training and assessment process to begin in 2014.

NAWDA  
Board of Directors  
2013-3014

**Industry:** Terry Welch, BP; Mike Ladd, Daikin; Robin Higgs, 3M

**Contractors:** Willie LaFavor, CSI; Carter Justice, KBR; Jim Mouch, Turner Industries

**Educators:** Tad Montgomery, Calhoun Community College; Jonny Bennett, TVTC; Ed Nichols, Decatur City Schools

**Community at Large:** Tiffany Brightwell, ABC; Mary Ila Ward, MCEDA/ Decatur Chamber of Commerce

## 3M Announces Plans For \$11.2 Million Expansion



3M announced in September plans for an expansion estimated to cost \$11.2 million. The project will create approximately 13 new jobs over a 3 year period. Currently 3M has

816 employees and an average of 71 contract employees working at the Decatur Site. The new employees will operate a specialty chemical facility within the existing plant located on State Docks Road in Decatur.

“What’s exciting to us about this is it’s ‘fine chemicals.’ Fine chemicals are small-volume, very high-dollar products,” said Robin Higgs, 3M’s site operations manager. “It’s not anything we make in any of our 3M chemical plants today.”

This project will also involve refurbishing an existing facility, modifying a lab space and construction of a filtration and packaging area.

Higgs said the chemical processes at the Decatur plant produce batches of product, usually adhesives, in the range of 3,000 to 6,000 gallons at a time. The plant will produce fine

chemicals in batches of about 300 gallons at a time. “We feel like this is sort of a foot in the door,” Higgs said, “once we have that capability and show we’re successful at it, there will be more to come. There’s plenty of space there for more expansion.”

Higgs said 3M began producing fine chemicals as part of a pilot project in St. Paul, Minn., 3M’s headquarters. She plans to hire the employees, including an engineer, a chemist and production workers, in Decatur and then send them to St. Paul for training.

“It’s unique in that there are very high-quality requirements and documentation requirements, which is new for us,” Higgs said. “Part of the reason we were considered for this project is the talent of the workforce in this area.”

Higgs said she has high expectations for the project. “It will be a challenge,” she said. “It’s something completely different and new for 3M.”

**“Part of the reason we were considered for this project is the talent of the workforce in this area.”**

**- Robin Higgs, 3M**

*By: Eric Fleischauer, Decatur Daily, 9/25/13*

## Workforce Development

### 8th Grade Endless Opportunities Hands-On Career Expo



Student experiences an intubation on an asthmatic training dummy.

Morgan County, Decatur City and Hartselle City Schools’ 8th graders participated in the inaugural Endless Opportunities Hands-On Career Expo at Ingalls Harbor Pavilion Meeting & Event Center on Wednesday, October 16th.

Approximately 1,500 students explored a wide variety of career clusters where they were able to participate in hands-on activities related to results of their Kuder Interest Inventory Assessment that was performed in September.

Students were able to participate in activities such as manicures and hairstyling with Calhoun Community College’s cosmetology group and program a robotic arm to grab pieces of candy at Alabama Technology Network’s display. At Ascend’s booth students watched as “ghost bubbles” were made from a mixture of dry ice, warm water and soap. The Tennessee Valley Training Center booth taught students how to be safe on an industrial job while the Decatur Morgan Hospital professionals allowed students to perform intubations on an asthmatic training dummy.

The rain didn’t stop students from participating in the outdoor activities. Students launched

model rockets with United Launch Alliance representatives, visited the Career Center trailer and manned police, fire and ambulance vehicles.

“This event was created to get students thinking about their career goals and the paths to get there earlier on. The hands-on activities allow the students to briefly experience each career field, show them what to expect and how to prepare to go to work in that field,” said Mary Ila Ward, representing MCEDA and Decatur Chamber of Commerce.



Endless Opportunities volunteers and professionals at Ingalls Harbor Pavilion Meeting & Event Center.

## AlphaPet Inc.

**\$190 Million**  
**Expansion Announcement**  
**March 22, 2013**  
**Decatur Country Club**



The Indorama Ventures Decatur site for AlphaPet.



Governor Bentley speaks at the Indorama Ventures announcement. At the Governor's side is Secretary of Commerce Greg Canfield.



Governor Bentley and Mr. Alope Lohia, Group CEO for Indorama Ventures, unveil a foundation stone for AlphaPet II Expansion.



Governor Bentley and Mr. Alope Lohia exchange gifts after unveiling the new expansion's foundation stone.



Governor Bentley, Mr. Alope Lohia, Mr. D.K. Agarwal, Secretary of Commerce Greg Canfield and Senator Arthur Orr observe the foundation stone for the AlphaPet II expansion.

# National Guard Announcement

**\$10 Million Investment  
August 8, 2013**

**Lurleen B. Wallace  
Development Center**



Governor Bentley and members of the National Guard.



Governor Bentley and Senator Arthur Orr.



Governor Bentley and Morgan County Commission Chairman Ray Long.



Governor Bentley and City of Decatur Mayor Don Kyle.



The National Guard's plans for the new training site.



Governor Bentley speaks at the Wallace Center.

## Busche

Busche, located in Hartselle, opened their doors in June for a ribbon cutting hosted by the Hartselle Area Chamber of Commerce. The Indiana-based metal machining company supports customers in the heavy trucking, agricultural, construction, automotive and HVAC industries.

After the purchase from Emerson Climate Technologies, formerly known as Copeland, the Hartselle location is up from the original 26 employees who opened the plant in October 2012. Busche currently has 55 employees. The company projects to have a total of 300 employees in the next 60 months.

Busche showcased their TS Standards certifications which certifies that the plant's quality systems, with their Computer Numeric Control (CNC) machines and Coordinate Measurement Machine (CMM), are in place and up to code with the automotive industry.



Busche staff and guests celebrated their ribbon cutting for the new facility on Thursday, June 6. Above photo courtesy of the Hartselle Enquirer. Bottom right cover photo courtesy of Busche of their new equipment.



Valley Rubber staff and guests celebrated with a ribbon cutting for the new building on Thursday, July 18. Photo courtesy of the Hartselle Enquirer.

## Valley Rubber

Located in Falkville, Valley Rubber had a \$1,600,000 expansion this year that included the purchase of a 48,000 square foot building on Buster Road. The addition of new equipment and 30 jobs was also included in their expansion. Valley Rubber now has a total of 132 employees. The company produces rubber molding products for the mining and aggregate, marine, offshore, railroad, road and bridge, and material handling industries.

The new building will be used to add a production line of rail fasteners for light-rail transit systems.

In August, Valley Rubber was included on *INC.* magazine's 2013's 500/5000, an exclusive ranking of the nation's fastest-growing private companies. Rankings are based on percentage revenue growth when comparing 2009 to 2012. This is Valley Rubber's fourth appearance in the past six years and they ranked 3,874 this year on the list.

## Anniversaries & Acknowledgments

### Magazine Recognizes Decatur for Business Recruitment

The Decatur metropolitan area received a Top 10 metro ranking from *Site Selection* magazine for the second year in a row for its ability to attract business.

Decatur earned the ranking in the category of "Metros of Less than 200,000 Population" in the March 2013 issue.

The Decatur area was ranked in a five-way tie for the seventh position for the number of projects announced in 2012.

### Terrell Industries - 25 years

Established in 1988, the non-profit company hires employees with trainable mental disabilities. The company currently has 42 employees.

Their greatest achievement per their last Synchronist visit, "Cross training their employees".

Products: Cylinder line assembly, tube bending and hinge assembly.

### ILPEA Industries - 25 years

Established in 1988 as Pantasote, it later became Holm Industries. Their name changed to Ilpea in 2010. The company currently has 78 employees. Products: Gaskets for refrigerators, gaskets for truck windshields, and weather stripping.

### Hexcel Corporation - 25 years

Established in 1988, known as Hispan, it was the first company to locate at Mallard-Fox Creek Industrial Park. The company currently has 171 employees.

Products: PAN precursor used to manufacture carbon fiber used in aerospace industry, recreational items such as fishing rods, golf clubs and bicycles.

Decatur's facility is Hexcel's only facility to produce PAN and, in acreage, is now the company's largest facility.

### Sonoco Products Company, Metco Steel Reel Plant - 50 years

Established in 1963, the plant currently has 147 employees. Their greatest achievement per their last Synchronist visit in 2012, "Operating at highest capacity ever".

Product: Steel "T" shipping reels.

# 2013 Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament and Dinner

MCEDA held its 19th Annual Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament on September 19, 2013 and Dinner on September 26, 2013. The golf tournament was held at Decatur Country Club and the dinner was held at Ingalls Harbor Pavilion Meeting and Event Center. There were approximately 80 golfers at the tournament and 160 guests in attendance at the dinner.

## A special thank you to all our sponsors

for helping make this event possible. We would not be able to have such a successful event without your support. Thank you!



## Golf Tournament Sponsors

### Golf Hole Sponsors

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3M  
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Decatur Morgan County  
Convention & Visitors Bureau  
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Jimmy Smith Jewelers

## FUN FACTS

- The golf tournament has only been rained out once in 19 years.
- In 19 years, the tournament's lowest handicap has been 1 and the highest handicap has been 75.

## Golf Tournament Winners

### First Place Team

John Pylant, Doug Chandler & Larry Byrd

### Second Place Team

Stewart Roby, Tate Godfrey, John Seymour & Wade Weaver

**Longest Drive** Richard Grace

### Third Place Team

John Eyster, Don Kyle, Larry Reid & Zac Richardson

### Best Effort Team

Jonny Bennett, Jeremy Seal & Daniel Noland

**Closest to the Pin** Michael Farley



## Toray Carbon Fibers America

Toray Carbon Fibers America announced in March of 2012 their \$97,000,000.00 expansion that would create 43 jobs.

Toray has 237 employees at this time.

The project will add a fourth carbonization line which will add capacity to its facility to manufacture carbon fiber.

Currently, Toray is in the midst of their construction phase. The project is on time and should be completed by March 2014.



Photos courtesy of Toray Carbon Fibers America of their current construction, including bottom left cover photo.

## Hexcel Corporation

In April of 2012, Hexcel Corporation announced a \$150,500,000.00 expansion that would create 35 new jobs.

Currently Hexcel has 171 employees.

The project is an addition to its existing plant facility to expand its operations to manufacture acrylic fiber for conversion to carbon fiber.

Currently, the expansion of Hexcel's Decatur plant continues moving forward according to announced plans and is tracking to meet project milestones as detailed in state and local project agreements.



Photos courtesy of Hexcel Corporation. Top right cover photo is of construction. Above photo is of the entirety of the Hexcel property.

## Polyplex USA

Polyplex, one of the world's largest producers of thin polyester films, first announced their plans for a new manufacturing plant in Decatur in July of 2011, that would create approximately 150 jobs and an investment of \$187,000,000.

Polyplex USA moved their offices from The Enrichment Center in March 2013 and opened its new manufacturing facility in April. The plant is now producing commercial grade films to the North American market.

In July 2012, Polyplex acquired the assets of Scholle Corporation's metalizing film business in Austell, Georgia. By the end of 2013, Polyplex will relocate these assets to their Decatur facility. This move will provide additional local jobs and add metalized film to its portfolio for the Decatur facility. Construction on the Metalizer building is on track for completion in November and the resin plant is on schedule to be completed in March 2014.

Polyplex's investment in Decatur at this time has created over 100 jobs in the local labor market as well as numerous local supplier relationships. This facility gives Polyplex USA the ability to be an all-in supplier serving all packaging and industrial needs from its North American manufacturing base.



Photo courtesy of Polyplex USA. Bottom middle cover photo also provided by Polyplex USA of their polyester films during the manufacturing process.

## Business Broadcast Briefs

Each year MCEDA facilitates our Existing Industry Visitations program by meeting with plant managers at facilities throughout the county.

Our 2013 visits were made with 34 of the 90 companies contacted by MCEDA. The majority of companies that participated this year were smaller companies with 25 employees or less and are private or family-owned companies, with the majority surveyed being producers of industrial goods. Three of the 34 are unionized.

Individual employers were asked several questions in regards to their business performance and product development. Sixty-eight percent of companies said their company sales were increasing with seventy percent producing new products in the last five years. Fifty-two percent of the companies said that they anticipate adding new products in the next two years.

Sixty-five percent of the companies that participated plan to expand within the next three years. This percentage has stayed above 50% for the past two years. If you would like a full copy of the *Business Broadcast* report, please call our office at 256-353-1213.

We would like to thank our new and renewing members that invest in our organization throughout the year. We appreciate your support and look forward to working with you in the future.

# 2012-2013 MCEDA Membership

3M Company  
AFC, Inc.  
Air Products & Chemicals, Inc.  
Alabama Ladder Company Inc.  
Alabama Technology Network  
Alliance Sand and Aggregates, LLC  
AlphaPet Inc.  
American Midstream Partners, LP  
**Associated Builders & Contractors of North Alabama**  
Automatic Screw Machine Products Co.  
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Decatur Morgan Hospital  
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Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce  
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Del Monte Pet Products

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Lakeland Industries, Inc.  
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Willo Products Company, Inc.  
Yates Constructors, LLC  
**New Members since Oct. 2012**  
*\*New Members since Oct. 2013*

