

Once Again, Mississippi Ranks #1

The newspaper headlines of the future will proclaim this statement. As we enter the 21st century, positive changes are being made in Mississippi. These changes will propel Mississippi to the top of any national charts or polls. Government and business leaders across the State of Mississippi are working to make your Mississippi the best.

High technology is the key to this success. The economy is now seamless, borderless and global. Mississippi has to keep up with this changing environment in order to remain competitive. We must keep up with the “speed of light” as technology changes daily. Over 700 business leaders met in Jackson this week at the Governor’s Conference on High Technology to discuss and learn how to keep up with the world.

The Advantage Mississippi Initiative is the first step to our success. Now we must spread the word. Mississippi has changed, and we must notify the nation and the world that Mississippi is the ideal place to do business. Mississippi must learn how to use technology to our advantage, to attract more high-tech industries and to use technology to become more productive.

We are making a serious investment in Mississippi’s future. As business leaders gather at the Governor’s Conference, they are displaying their commitment to our future. They are exploring avenues to bring current companies to life with the power of technology. They understand the need to educate themselves and to change with the times. Companies in Mississippi can no longer rely on people in Mississippi and the Southeast as new customers. They must look outside our state, outside the South for new markets. An entire world that has never experienced what we have to offer exists. This new market is ours for the taking, but we must be proactive. Mississippians cannot wait for the world to come to us; Mississippians have to conquer the world.

As technology accelerates productivity in the workplace, so does the need to upgrade the skills of current and potential employees. Mississippi must have a skilled workforce, if more high-tech companies are going to re-locate to Mississippi. We must work with kindergarten through graduate schools to provide potential companies with the skilled workforce they need. In order for an industry to be productive and successful in Mississippi, it will need the assistance of everyone, not just government incentives.

The Governor’s Conference on High Technology brings together many like-minded individuals. The recent success stories in Mississippi are the result of many people working together. They have pooled their resources and knowledge to do what is best for our future. Attendees to the High Tech Conference gain knowledge, but they also gain a network of contacts. Contacts who are able to work together to make things happen in and for Mississippi shared their experiences, successes and failures. These attendees

have left Jackson, but they are armed with powerful ammunition to make Mississippi an even better place to live and work.

Mississippi has taken another step to becoming America's State of Promise.