

To: Armerita Tell
From: Bentley
Date: 5/22/03

RE: Natchez Economic Development Proposal (Limbic Systems, Inc.)

Yesterday, I met with Mike Ferdinand (Director of Natchez-Adams County EDA) and two representatives of Limbic Systems, Inc (James Pennington and Rick Mancilla) in order to discuss funding possibilities through the DRA. This meeting was requested by Ferdinand as a follow-up to a previous meeting in Natchez that was attended by Steve Hale, Paul Walker (MDA), and myself.

Limbic Systems is a digital imaging company that is attempting to mainstream the use of high-tech, high-resolution digital images in areas such as fingerprint analysis, medical x-ray analysis, and industrial x-ray analysis (such as the ones taken at Ingalls Shipyard to ensure structural soundness of ships and their parts).

Limbic representatives, at the urging of Ferdinand and other local citizens, have been working to establish a partnership with Alcorn State University. According to Ferdinand and others, Dr. Bristow is 100% on board with this plan and has already applied for several grants to help get the research side of this project going. The ultimate goal for Dr. Bristow is to establish a "Center of Excellence" in this digital imaging technology at ASU (as part of their nursing program).

Ferdinand and Limbic officials are looking for funding to open the first processing/information compilation center in Natchez. They have identified a number of local resources and the City of Natchez has offered a vacant building to the company. However, they are seeking about **\$150,000** in additional funding to get this center up-and-running. They are planning to turn in a DRA application and have already gained assurances from DRA staff that their project will be "eligible." Ferdinand and Limbic claim that this project, if funded, will produce an immediate impact of 50-60 jobs in Natchez (organizing and analyzing previously recorded digital images).

Limbic has given Ferdinand, Dr. Bristow, and others assurances that they are interested in Natchez and Mississippi for the long-term... they are in the process of establishing a subsidiary company that would be majority owned by Mississippians (largely investors from the Natchez area). This new Mississippi company, along with ASU, would own the intellectual property rights to any new products, research methods, analysis tools, etc. that are produced at the Natchez facility.

Steve Hale and Paul Walker (MDA, Southwest Mississippi) are both familiar with this project and have been working with Natchez to stay abreast of any developments. It sounds like a good project for a hard-hit area of the state and, on its face, it seems fundable through DRA.

Let me know if you have any questions or instructions.