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THE ALLIANCE IS A PUBLICATION OF THE LOUISIANA CHEMICAL INDUSTRY ALLIANCE, WHOSE MEMBERS ARE LOUISIANA'S CHEMICAL MANUFACTURERS AND THEIR VENDORS AND SUPPLIERS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE PUBLICATION IS TO ADVOCATE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE BENEFITS OF CHEMISTRY TO LOUISIANA AND THE WORLD, WHILE HIGHLIGHTING ITS ESSENTIAL NATURE AND BENEFITS TO EVERYDAY LIVING. THE ALLIANCE IS PUBLISHED TWICE ANNUALLY.

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# DECISION 2015



## A LETTER FROM DAN AND GREG

Louisiana is now in the middle of the political season.

Next to football, duck hunting and chicken sauce piquante, there's probably nothing that we love more than our politics.

By the time the elections are over, we'll have a new governor, a new lieutenant governor, a new speaker of the house and some new legislators to swear in on inauguration day in January.

Their faces will be different from their predecessors, and their party jerseys might be different colors, but the challenge they face is an old one.

Louisiana's budget continues to have a problem of near biblical proportions, and it's anybody's guess how the state's new leadership will try to fix it.

Projections suggest revenue shortfalls approaching a billion dollars, big money in anybody's book. How the legislative cloth is cut to fit the fiscal pattern could determine the future of post-secondary education, health care, infrastructure improvements and economic development in Louisiana for years to come.

One thing won't change in 2016 and beyond.

The Louisiana Chemical Association and the Louisiana Chemical Industry Alliance will continue to use the best resources at our disposal to analyze how these challenges will affect our members, propose programs and processes to deal with them and implement plans with the support of our boards of directors and our memberships.

You are our number one resource! We need your sage advice and counsel as never before because the LCA and the LCIA exist because of you, our members. You all recognize the need to have organizations speak for you with a united voice, associations that can put into action initiatives that preserve and protect job growth in our state and nation.

We count it a privilege to represent you and are grateful for your ongoing support in the form of board memberships; dues; committee work; participation in the Annual Legislative Conference and the LCA/LCIA Annual Meeting; LAMP golf tournaments and sponsorships such as those that appear in this edition of the Alliance.

But your major contributions to LCA and LCIA and LAMP come your knowledge of the marketplace, your having to deal with the day-to-day hassles of being in business and industry and your providing guidance to us as the staff of your organizations.

Thank you for all your support in the past and for your continuing help in the future. Together we can help chart what that future will be.

Very truly yours,

Dan S. Borné,  
President

Gregory Bowser,  
Executive Vice President

LCA and LCIA



Dan S. Borné

Dan S. Borné, President  
Louisiana Chemical Association  
Louisiana Chemical Industry Alliance



Gregory M. Bowser

Gregory M. Bowser,  
Executive Vice President  
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# SOLUTIONS THROUGH SCIENCE: THE SCIENCE OF ART



By: Blythe Lamonica, Solutions Through Science Executive Director

It is not often a company or organization has the opportunity to showcase its products on such a unique or grand scale as that of a six-story building. However, Solutions Through Science, a partnership of the chlorine and vinyl producers and users in Louisiana, had such an opportunity when STS began collaborating with The Walls Project earlier this year on one of its public arts projects in downtown Baton Rouge.



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The Walls Project started in 2012 with the intention of “bridging the gap between the artistic and business communities in order to accomplish not only city beautification but also economic development in order to serve a greater good.” For STS and its member companies, the opportunity to use the forum of public art as a way to promote the benefits of chlorine and vinyl was not only a new medium but also an innovative way to reach a key audience – students - since the mural was to be painted on the side of a high school. In addition to promoting STS member products, the chlorine and vinyl industries have also undertaken a commitment to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education in Louisiana. STS hoped the mural would be inspiration for the students entering their school every day to choose a path or career in the STEM fields.


After thoughtful consideration, STS proudly unveiled in August, as title sponsor, The Walls Project Mural #21,

“On the Shoulders of Giants,” on the facade of the Mentorship Academy, a charter school in downtown Baton Rouge. The mural illustrates the group’s support for STEM education in Louisiana and interweaves the values of STEM with the importance of how chemistry, especially chlorine and vinyl manufactured by STS member companies, play an important role in our daily lives.

The project was completed by respected South Florida artists and first time Walls Project muralists Eduardo Mendieta, Jay Bellicchi and Paul Hughes. The mural depicts three school-aged children dreaming of the possibilities a STEM education can bring set to a backdrop of the periodic table. The periodic table was chosen since it is one of the earliest symbols of a person’s science education and is so vital to a cross-section of industries from pharmaceuticals to chemicals.

Many companies within the chemical industries are increasing STEM education

outreach efforts within Louisiana high schools and technical schools given the significant economic development taking place across the state. To date, \$70-90 billion in new projects are planned, many of which are in chemical and petrochemical fields. STEM education is essential to this economic development. Schools like the Mentorship Academy are more important than ever in educating the future workforce of our state.

“On the Shoulders of Giants” is inspired by the harmonious relationship of art and science exemplified by STS’s commitment to STEM education and the Mentorship Academy’s curriculum and goals. Solutions Through Science maintains there is an art to science. But, through the Walls Project, STS has proven there is a science to art. 

*For more information about Solutions Through Science and The Walls Project, please visit [stsla.org](http://stsla.org).*





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## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

# Exxon

ExxonMobil has been operating in Baton Rouge for more than a century. In 1909, Standard Oil executives were attracted to Louisiana and ultimately Baton Rouge because the location offered access to the oil fields in this state and in Texas and Oklahoma. Rail, pipeline and river transportation networks, the strong local buy-in, and an ample and able workforce provided great opportunity for success. Over the years, the company that would later be known as “ExxonMobil” has grown from a small refinery located on cotton fields to a sophisticated, world-class, refining and petrochemical complex.

### 100 YEARS OF GROWTH

The original refinery consisted of seven stills that could refine roughly 2,000 barrels of oil per day. Just 10 years later, that capacity had increased to 42,000. Today, the refinery is capable of processing over 500,000 barrels per day, making it the fourth largest refinery in the country. Pioneering breakthroughs to expand the use of oil and the longevity of oil reserves, helped ensure that Baton Rouge stayed at the forefront of the oil and gas industry.

Supporting World War II required innovation and efficiency throughout our country, and the Baton Rouge site was keen to do its part. In 1943, the company constructed the first catalytic cracker (cat cracker) in the world. At the time, the new unit was

hailed by Fortune Magazine as, “the most revolutionary chemical engineering achievement of the last 50 years.” This new addition allowed the Refinery to help fuel our troops on the seas, on land, and in the air – notably during the Battle of Britain, where it is said that the high performing 100-octane fuel helped the Allies’ planes out perform their German counterparts and win the battle.

The post-war years saw Baton Rouge become an epicenter of the oil and gas industry. The increasing demand for better fuels was married with the new demand for derivative products. As a result, the Refinery was joined by a Chemical Plant, Plastics Plant and Polyolefins Plant. Together, the facilities began producing products that are now essential to everyday life.

# Mobil

Today, ExxonMobil Baton Rouge sits as one of the world's largest modern integrated petrochemical facilities. In addition to the production plants aforementioned, there is also a Resins Finishing Plant and a Lube Oil Blending Plant integrated in to the system. Together these facilities make Baton Rouge a critical location for ExxonMobil and the petrochemical industry. Continued success, however, is never an assured thing. Yet, the keys to a competitive future are quite similar to those over 100 years ago.

## **GREAT OPPORTUNITY ALONG THE COAST**

As in 1909, Louisiana's geographic location still makes it an excellent place to do business in the oil and gas industry. Baton Rouge's access to the Mississippi River, railroads and pipelines helps provide access to valuable feedstock bases from around the world, while providing distribution access to both international and domestic markets.

Bob Johnston, ExxonMobil Chemical Plant manager, says "The combination of the shale revolution and advances in production capability are creating significant opportunities for growth to support global demand. We want to be a player in that growth."

## **SAFE AND RELIABLE OPERATIONS**

Johnston says that the key to taking advantage of growth opportunities requires safe and reliable operations.

"Our pursuit for excellence in all that we do starts with our Operations Integrity Management System (OIMS). OIMS is the cornerstone of our commitment to managing risk and achieving excellence in operational performance. OIMS is implemented across our worldwide operations and reinforces our belief that all incidents are preventable. We believe that safety is a value - not a priority. Priorities change - values do not."

ExxonMobil also looks to sustain and continue to improve performance with LPS (Loss Prevention System) that focuses on personal safety and accountability. LPS is a behavior-based program that integrates safety into all that they do.

Johnston explains, "We seek a culture where everyone not only takes personal responsibility for their own safety, but is actively intervening to ensure the safety of others on site. Our Chemical Plant employees have worked for more than 2 years injury-free (and counting), and we believe LPS will help us continue to our goal of Nobody Gets Hurt."



# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

## ExxonMobil

While they strive to avoid any kind of loss, ExxonMobil also works hard to stay prepared to respond. In the event of an incident, the company has world class industrial Emergency Response operations.

“Our Emergency Response team is a group of highly trained individuals capable of responding to a wide range of emergency scenarios and providing mutual aid to the municipality and other facilities if needed. I have had the opportunity to watch them train, and the teamwork and commitment demonstrated is outstanding” said Johnston. To their credit, the ExxonMobil Emergency Response team has won a number of awards over their years for their performance and readiness.

### A COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

This willingness to assist local agencies is part of the community culture that ExxonMobil exhibits. On average, Company employees spend more than 40,000 hours per year volunteering in the community.

“ExxonMobil has been successful in Baton Rouge, in part, due to its dedication to being a good corporate citizen”, Johnston says. ExxonMobil is the largest provider to the Capital Area United Way at \$1.5 million in 2014. In total, ExxonMobil donated \$5 million to charitable organizations and colleges and universities. ExxonMobil is also committed to supporting their near neighbors in the north Baton Rouge area through numerous non-profit organizations.

This dedication to community outreach is something that ExxonMobil Baton Rouge is looking to maintain in the future. Johnston added that the fortunes of ExxonMobil and the local community are undeniably intertwined.

“We are nearly 6,000 employees and contractors who

live, play and educate our kids in this community. As such, a strong and vibrant Baton Rouge and surrounding communities are vital to our continued success in recruiting and maintaining a world class workforce,” he says.

### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

To assist with developing, recruiting and maintaining a world-class workforce, ExxonMobil is investing significant resources into the local education system. Most recently, ExxonMobil has partnered with NMSI (National Math and Science Initiative) to provide high quality professional development to teachers in the Baton Rouge area.

Johnston says, “The oil and gas industry is highly technical. The nature of our industry, with its demand for safety and technical expertise, will require that there is an ample STEM trained workforce to support our industry.” Johnston adds that ExxonMobil is helping to lead the charge locally to support higher standards of education in the schools. By doing so, the company is working to prepare the next generation of local workforce to meet the demand of multiple sectors of the economy, including the oil and gas industry.







In addition to the emphasis on developing students for tomorrow’s jobs, ExxonMobil is making an effort to cultivate underdeveloped talent in the area. Current workforce demands across the industry are not being met in some of the trades. ExxonMobil is helping to fill this demand by partnering with Baton Rouge Community College and contractor companies to support a certification program called the North Baton Rouge Industrial Training Initiative. This program provides technical skill training and certifications to get students qualified for good trade jobs in pipefitting, welding and electrical fields. ExxonMobil has a similar partnership with the city of Baker that focuses on millwright crafts. ExxonMobil hopes that these efforts will help drive success for the company, the local area, and the industry for years to come.

**ENSURING A STRONG BUSINESS CLIMATE**

ExxonMobil’s growth over the years and continued service to the community demonstrate the value of the company and the industry. With a prospect of a bright future on the horizon, it is important that policies that

affect the industry recognize the value it brings to the state of Louisiana and the U.S. Public policies must be consistent and reflect the realities of sound science and market forces.

“With stable and unbiased policies supporting competitive free markets, the energy industry and companies like ExxonMobil can help lead an economic resurgence with investments in new projects, new technologies and new jobs,” says Johnston.

He is optimistic about the future of ExxonMobil Baton Rouge. “There are great opportunities on the horizon, but challenges just as well. To succeed, we must continue to invest in new technology, become more efficient in our operations and help ensure the availability of a strong future workforce. We will face the future with a relentless focus on safety, reliability, quality and environmental performance.”

With such a tenacity and determination to consistently get it right, ExxonMobil is poised to be successful in Baton Rouge for another 100 years.



## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:



### A WOMAN-OWNED, LOUISIANA BUSINESS

Lela Mae Wilkes, owner and president of Brown Eagle, with Joe Jerome Williams, Operator, staging super sacks for shipment.



# BROWN EAGLE

Brown Eagle has nearly 50 years of experience providing contract labor to industrial facilities to manage and operate on-site packaging units, warehousing, materials handling, shipping and logistics, allowing facilities to **decouple unskilled labor from their manufacturing operations** and acquire significant cost savings. Brown Eagle specializes in materials handling and handles all shapes and sizes of products, from pellets to powder, liquid, bulk and bales. With five decades in the chemical industry, chances are if a company makes it, Brown Eagle has packaged it.



Brown Eagle's management team, all COSS certified. From left: Clinton Alfonso-Logistics Supervisor, Sherman Anderson-Assistant Project Superintendent, Lela Mae Wilkes-Owner & President Tim Carlos-Training Coordinator, James Mc Dowell-Safety Coordinator, Ronnie Anderson - Project Superintendent

Brown Eagle, a 100 % woman-owned, Louisiana business has walked hand-in-hand with the Louisiana chemical industry since the late 1960s. Through technological advances and improved safety standards, the company, like the industry, has adapted and modernized in response to the ever-changing market and environment.

After a plant makes its product, Brown Eagle handles the rest - putting the product into containers, moving the product into the warehouse for storage and arranging transportation via truck or rail. It provides a cost-effective approach to packaging, warehousing and logistics, allowing plants to focus their resources where they need them most.

Due to cross training in packaging, warehousing and shipping, Brown Eagle offers a flexible and adaptable workforce to allow the industrial site to increase or decrease manning as activity levels change.

The company's owner Lela Mae Wilkes has played a critical role in the chemical industry for decades, and has been overseeing Brown Eagle as president for nearly 30 years.

## HISTORY OF BROWN EAGLE

In 1967, Brown Eagle pioneered the concept of specialization in low cost contract material handling, packaging, warehousing, shipping and logistics. Brown Eagle's founders recognized a need in the chemical facilities and set out to develop those services to the highest standards, providing integrated on-site services to help industrial facilities increase efficiency, productivity and reduce operational costs.

"It was a new idea for a company to contract out its packaging, warehousing and logistics. It had never been done before," Lela Mae said. "That was the beginning of Brown Eagle, an innovative concept for the chemical services industry."

The company's first customer was Ciba Geigy, now Syngenta, which remains a valuable customer today. Brown Eagle provides the full range of services, from packaging and warehousing to distribution and logistics.

"They were a new plant, and they were doing everything that was on the cutting edge, just as they still do today," Lela Mae said. "They took this concept and ran with it, giving us an opportunity to save them significant costs in terms of overhead and labor."

Over the years, Brown Eagle has worked in plants from Illinois, across the Gulf Coast from Houston to Atlanta and up and down the Mississippi River.

## FOUNDING MEMBER OF LOUISIANA CHEMICAL INDUSTRY ALLIANCE

As a founding member, original organizer and 10-year board member of the Louisiana Chemical Industry Alliance, at a time when the chemical industry was experiencing adversity from environmental groups and state government, Lela Mae's vision and ideas helped move the organization forward and achieve the success it has today.

LCIA was created when the chemical industry was under siege by national and international environmental advocacy groups. Lela Mae was the only woman at a table of individuals trying to find a way to develop programs and raise awareness of the chemical industry's diligent focus on safety and the widespread benefits it provided to the state.

"There was not another female in sight, and it remained that way for at least another five years," Lela Mae said. "But the world has changed since LCIA started, with more women in the industry and in leadership positions."

Part of raising industry awareness involved participating in the political system through campaign contributions. This could be done through a Political Action Committee formed by the Louisiana Chemical Association and LCIA called LAMP. However, raising money for that PAC was difficult. Lela Mae proposed the idea of hosting an annual golf tournament, and the LCA/LCIA team agreed it could be a very effective way to raise the funds needed. Not only did the tournament prove successful in the short-term, but LAMP has continued to grow every year and has become one of the largest PACs in Louisiana. The primary reason for its success was the annual golf tournaments in the Baton Rouge and Lake Charles areas. Lela Mae not only developed



# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

## **BROWN EAGLE** YOUR ON-SITE PRODUCT FINISHING PARTNER

the idea, but has worked tirelessly with the committees formed to put on the tournament. LCIA's efforts to promote the chemical industry were very impactful and remain critical today.

### **BROWN EAGLE TODAY**

Lela Mae purchased Brown Eagle after working for the original founders first as the controller, general manager and then president. When she became president in 1987, the chemical industry in Louisiana was booming. It was coming out of difficult times, having overcome persistent adversity, in part with the help of LCIA's efforts.

Along with Lela Mae's strong leadership, the chemical industry's success translated into success for Brown Eagle as well. LCIA had also instituted an effort to reach out to the smaller, locally owned companies to connect them with chemical plants in the area. Lela Mae grew Brown Eagle to a \$10 million company with 300 employees.

"What we bring to the table is expertise and specialization in this particular field. Our people are highly trained to perform these functions safely and efficiently while ensuring quality, and because we're a small, local company with low overhead costs, we're able to pass those savings on to the customer. That's what sets Brown Eagle apart from larger companies that offer these services as part of their overall contracts," Lela Mae said.

Brown Eagle's supervisors are specialists, who make a career of their positions and relieve the plant personnel of the details. The company's current management has nearly 200 years of combined experience

supporting the chemical industry by actively participating with clients to increase cost improvement efficiencies.

"We have partnered with the chemical industry for nearly 50 years and have a clear understanding of the specific needs of the industry as it relates to packaging, warehousing, shipping and logistics," Lela Mae said.

And safety has been a priority all along the way. Brown Eagle employees focus on safety, quality and productivity every day, and those priorities have made the company successful. Brown Eagle recently celebrated one year without an injury and will soon reach one million safe work hours, meaning no one has been hurt while working. Every team member, from new hires to senior employees, is responsible for safety and takes it very seriously.

All Brown Eagle employees contribute not only to the company's safety achievements, but to the quality of work it provides to customers. The offsite warehouse team has shipped billions of pounds of product without an incorrect shipment and has never lost or misplaced product within the warehouse.

"Quality comes down to the smallest details. You have to put the right label on the product, get it on the right truck and it has to be done on time," Lela Mae said. "Our customers rely on us to execute the job perfectly every time."

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

Brown Eagle plans to bring on 350,000 square feet of new warehouse space in the capital region over the next 18 months, and

is actively seeking customers to pre-lease that space. Lela Mae also plans to open an office in Lake Charles next year.

"We want to be a part of all the exciting projects and expansions taking place in Louisiana, and we're working hard to establish relationships with all the new people in the industry," Lela Mae said.

### **FROM MILKING COWS TO INDUSTRY LEADER**

How did Lela Mae go from milking cows in a dairy farm as a young girl to playing a critical role in the state's chemical industry and leading a chemical service company?

Lela Mae said sometimes she has to pinch herself to be sure it's not a dream.

"I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for Brown Eagle's employees and the outstanding job they do with safety and ensuring quality. Everybody is a part of what has to be done, and I learned that early on as a young girl working on a dairy farm," Lela Mae said. "It was bigger than just the people milking the cows. If the fence builder didn't do his job, the cows would escape, and you wouldn't be able to get any milk."

Lela Mae was recognized by the Baton Rouge Business Report as one of the 2005 Influential Women in Business. She is a board member of Northwestern Louisiana University's School of Business and an inductee of its alumni hall of distinction, The Long Purple Line.

To learn more about Brown Eagle, visit [www.browneagle.com](http://www.browneagle.com).

# BROWN EAGLE POST MANUFACTURING SERVICES

## Value Added Services

**Customer Service:** “When you have a Customer Service issue, you get the president of the company, me,” Lela Mae said.

**Flexibility:** Brown Eagle offers plants the flexibility to “man or woman as needed.” Companies can increase or decrease resources as activity levels change.

**Adaptability:** Brown Eagle’s cross training in packaging, warehousing and shipping allows team members to be moved where needed.

**24/7 emergency response service:** Brown Eagle management and support staff are available on a 24/7 basis. The Project Superintendent, Day Supervisor, Safety Coordinator and Training Coordinator are always available in case of an emergency.

**24/7 technical/project support:** Brown Eagle has a mandatory and stand-by call out list for manning as packaging schedules dictate. The Brown Eagle Day Supervisor is on call for packaging technical/product support.

## Training

**Training Within Industry:** Brown Eagle utilizes TWI to develop and build a productive workforce by defining standardized work for the best way to accomplish any specific job. The workforce is cross-trained as needed to work in packaging, warehousing or shipping. **Certified Occupational Safety Specialist Certification:** Brown Eagle management and supervision are COSS certified.

**LSU Management and Leadership Certificate:** Brown Eagle management and supervisors are trained by LSU.

## Packaging And Assembly

High volume packaging experience includes powder, liquid, granular, bulk and bales – everything from 1.5 oz. to 1,000 lb. super sacks and from 2.5 gallon jugs to 30,000 gallon tank cars, varying size bales and everything in between. Cross-trained team members performing multiple packaging tasks in different material handling and packaging units provide:

- Product Bundling
- Shrink Wrapping
- Stretch Wrapping
- Small Packaging
- Co-Packaging
- Product Labeling
- Bar Coding
- Sticker and RFID
- Label Application

## Product And Material Handling

Cross-trained teams reduce the costs of processing and assembling both raw materials and finished goods. Brown Eagle provides a full range of product handling services, including:

- Integrated Material Handling
- Container Assembly, Selection and Material Sourcing
- Flexible Vertical and Horizontal Cartoning
- Product Coding
- Recall/Rework
- Product Inspection

## Workforce Solutions

Brown Eagle takes the hassle out of staffing by meeting your ever-changing production schedules and seasonal needs, providing:

- Proprietary Assessment Testing
- Payroll and Benefit Administration
- Contingency Staffing
- Temp to Hire
- Direct Hiring

## Warehouse Management & Order Fulfillment Services

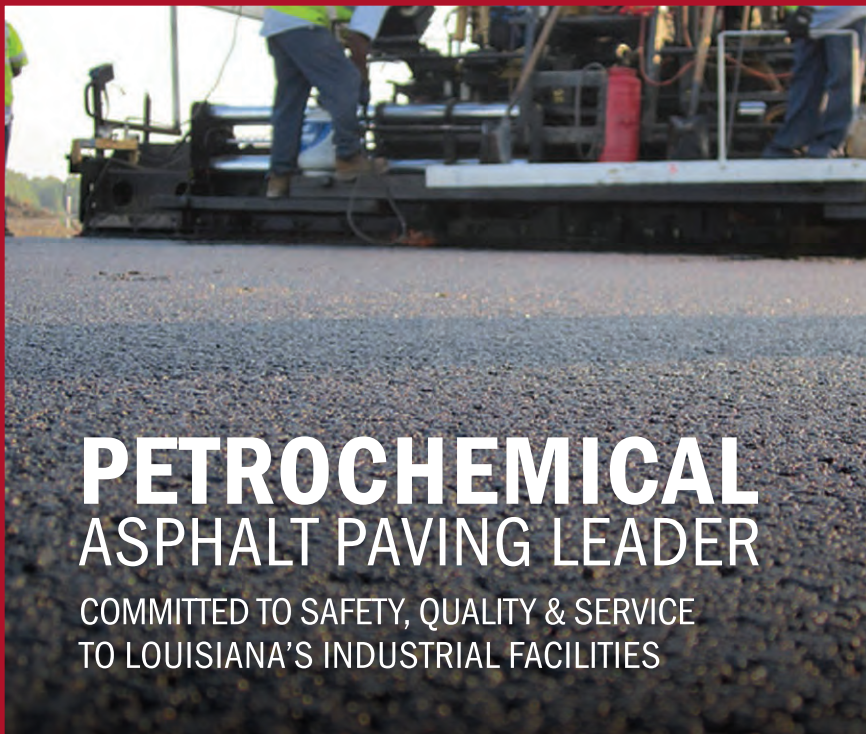
Brown Eagle will tailor an optimized warehouse operating plan to meet client needs on a case-by-case basis. Design solution considerations include:

- Warehouse Selection, Leasing and Management
- Inventory Systems Integration
- Dedicated and Shared-User Operations
- Automation and Sortation
- High-Density Storage
- Climate-Controlled Facilities
- Cross-Docking and Merge-in-Transit
- Retail Mixing Center Operations

## Logistics Support Services

Brown Eagle experts optimize and manage logistics scheduling, loading and shipping of raw materials and finished products. With fewer vendors and tasks to manage, customers can focus on other critical business issues while Brown Eagle takes care of:

- Logistics Scheduling and Dispatching
- Long Haul Trucking
- Hot-Shot Trucking
- Tank Truck Loading
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- Truck Load (TL) and/or less than truck load (LTL)



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# WHY WE NEED A **TWO-THIRDS' VOTE** ON TAX INCREASES

By John Kennedy, State Treasurer

**L**ike a magician pulling a rabbit out of a hat, legislators performed an illusory feat earlier this year. They generated \$400 million in tax increases with a simple majority vote.

A judge ultimately will decide whether Louisiana taxpayers deserve a refund on this performance. The Louisiana Chemical Association challenged the tax increases, contending that a two-thirds' vote should have been required.



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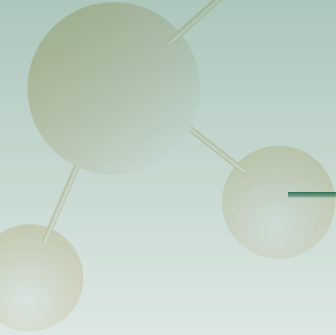


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## The greatest advantage of the two-thirds rule is in preventing the legislature from enacting tax laws which could place too much of a tax burden on the taxpayers.

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I don't know what the outcome of the legal battle will be. I do know this: If the Chemical Association loses, we should amend Louisiana's constitution to make the two-thirds' vote requirement clear. Here's why.

Flip to Article VII, Section 2 of the Louisiana Constitution, and you'll learn about the hefty hurdle the Legislature is supposed to clear in levying a new tax, increasing an existing tax or repealing an existing tax exemption. Doing any of those things is supposed to require the approval of two-thirds of the House and the Senate.

A two-thirds' vote is hard to achieve.

It's supposed to be.

Do you know who established that hurdle? The voters and taxpayers of Louisiana did, and rightly so. Tax increases impact families and businesses. They put a pinch on pocketbooks and profit margins. You can't set aside as much for your kids' college education if you're paying more in taxes. You can't expand your business. You can't save as much for retirement.


The \$827 million in new taxes and fees passed by the Legislature last spring will affect about every Louisianian, from citizens asking for a copy of their driving record to the largest petrochemical company. Nearly \$400 million of that additional revenue was passed by less than a two-thirds' vote. The Legislature says only a majority vote is required in this instance.

The Legislature's actions created hard feelings. They frayed the relationship with the business community. This is why these actions shouldn't be taken with a simple majority vote.

Furthermore, all of this was done because state officials refuse to force state government to live within its means. I've said it before, and I'll say it again. We don't have a revenue problem. We have a spending problem.

The legislative session wasn't over a month before the business community filed suit, raising some very good arguments. The first lawsuit (there may be more) involves House Concurrent Resolution No. 8. HCR8 suspends an exemption on 1 percent of the sales and use tax on business utilities, which means many businesses now must pay more in sales taxes on their utility bills. In its lawsuit, the Louisiana Chemical Association argues, among other things, that HCR8 is unconstitutional because it was not passed by two-thirds of the House.

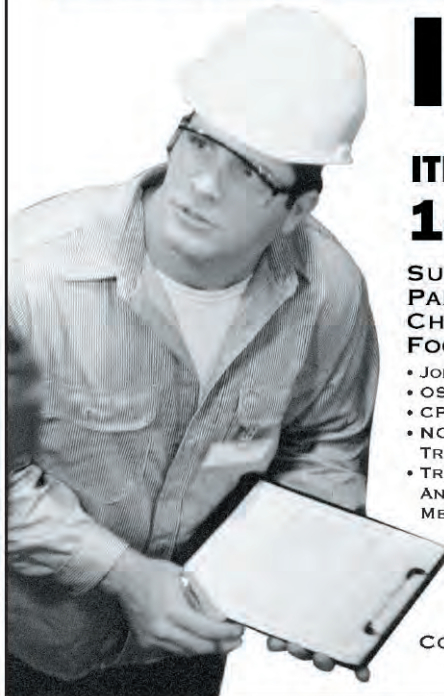
The litigation is in its infancy. The result is uncertain. What's not uncertain is this: The Louisiana Constitutional Convention of 1973, which rewrote the state's constitution, visited the two-thirds' vote requirement and opted overwhelmingly against making any changes. They kept the two-thirds' vote requirement to raise taxes that was also in the 1921 constitution.

Consider this excerpt from a memo written by the research staff of the Louisiana Constitutional Convention in 1973: "The greatest advantage of the two-thirds rule is in preventing the legislature from enacting tax laws which could place too much of a tax burden on the taxpayers. Accordingly, the two-thirds rule prevents the legislature from passing tax laws too hastily and without serious considerations." That's why the convention committee notes on the two-thirds' requirement proposal say that a two-thirds' vote is required on "all tax matters" - no exceptions. 

Raising taxes should require serious thought. If the Legislature truly needs to do it, there should be broad, deep support, not a simple majority. A supermajority requirement makes for a stronger, more durable law. Generations of Louisiana voters have insisted on a supermajority to raise taxes.

If the courts rule against the Louisiana Chemical Association, it will probably be on a technicality, such as that our constitution is somehow unclear. If that happens, we need to amend our state constitution immediately to provide in simple, clear and unmistakable language what I believe the delegates who drafted our constitution and the voters who approved it intended all along: a two-thirds' vote is required whenever the Legislature votes in any fashion to take more money out of taxpayers' pockets. Period. No exceptions.

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# CITY YEAR BATON ROUGE

**DISCIPLINE, PURPOSE, PRIDE**

**By Juliette Rocheleau**

It's autumn in Louisiana and the alarm clock reads 6AM. For many students across America, the routine is fairly similar: wake up, eat breakfast, brush your teeth, catch the bus, chat with friends, attend class, go home, do (at least half of the assigned) homework, repeat. Ultimately, these students will receive their high school diplomas and move on to become contributing citizens of American society. But what was once thought of as a simple inevitability has become a harrowing point for concern, especially for students living in high poverty areas. These students are forced to shoulder numerous responsibilities, taking the outside concerns of their community into the school with them. Problems with coursework, issues with consistent attendance, and various behavior concerns play major roles in a student's chances for success.

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According to Johns Hopkins University, research shows that students with difficulties in even one of these areas has less than a 20% chance of graduating high school on time. In these classrooms, teachers are working their hardest to meet the demands of both their students and the new standardized educational policies with only eight hours in the typical school day. To alleviate this human capital crisis, City Year sends red jackets into schools to support these teachers and serve bright students.

City Year is a national education nonprofit laser focused on increasing the high school graduation rate. Spirit, discipline, purpose, and pride; these are the cornerstones of City Year's foundation. Within 27 different communities across America, City Year AmeriCorps members enter schools as full time tutors and near-peer mentors, working with teachers on aligning lesson plans and serving students.

In the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, City Year Louisiana was founded to address the needs of students in both the Baton Rouge and New Orleans communities. In 2011, City Year Louisiana became two sites, City Year Baton Rouge and City Year New Orleans in order to better serve the specific needs of each community. Now, 10 years after its founding, City Year Baton Rouge is thriving.

In Baton Rouge, 72 AmeriCorps members work across seven different schools to mentor and tutor students. City Year understands the importance of addressing attendance and behavior needs as well as course work. AmeriCorps members employ the Whole Child, Whole School approach in coaching students not only in academics, but in the soft skills necessary to succeed in today's society. And while there is no typical day for an AmeriCorps member with City Year, a day of service will find the City Year team



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arriving before the first student and staying long after the last student has left. Typical tasks would have AmeriCorps members “power greeting” students everyday with high fives and smiles, planning lessons with teachers, creating school wide behavior incentives like haunted houses and field days, running mentoring groups like Girl Talk and Gentlemen of Greatness to promote positive relationships and build self-esteem, providing whole class behavior support to their partner teacher, and more—the day is jam packed and positive impact is on the rise.

At the close of the 2014-2015 school year, students who worked with City Year Baton Rouge AmeriCorps members increased their state assessment scores in math by 88%, and in English Language Arts by 75%. Through attendance initiatives, 62.5% of students supported by City Year increased their Average Daily Attendance by 2+%. And with whole school positive behavior initiatives, individualized behavior coaching, and powerful mentoring groups, 41.8% of students supported by City Year decreased behavioral incidents. City Year is honing in on making sustainable changes at the local level, as well as across the country. Recently, a third party evaluator, Policies Studies Associates (PSA) compared 150 City Year schools across the country to 450 like schools over the course of three years. They found that schools that partner with City Year were two times more likely to improve proficiency rates in English Language Arts than schools that did not partner with City Year, and three times more likely to improve proficiency rates in math.

Change is on the horizon. In Louisiana, 28% of students suffer from economic challenges due to living in poverty, making it difficult for students to learn when basic needs go unmet. Research shows that struggling students can achieve with the right supports at the right time,

but teachers and schools do not always have the time and resources to meet each student’s needs. As a result, students slip through school ill-equipped for the future. City Year Baton Rouge is working to change this direction in Louisiana with its long-term impact plan to dramatically increase the graduation pipeline and prepare students to wake up and become the contributing citizens of society that a quality education, will afford them. Spirit, discipline, purpose, and pride- from our AmeriCorps members to our students, our teachers to our community partners, we are joined together under these foundational values to build a better tomorrow for all students. Students who will wake up, eat breakfast, go to school and receive a quality education, regardless of their zip code. 



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Coalition for  
Common Sense



# NOW IS THE TIME TO IMPROVE THE LEGAL CLIMATE

By Jim Harris  
Coalition for Common Sense

The U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform released a new national survey on state legal climates recently, and the outlook is not good. Louisiana's legal climate ranks next to last for the third consecutive time, only scoring better than West Virginia.



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Of our neighboring states, Arkansas ranked 41st, Mississippi ranked 43rd, and Texas ranked 40th. Seventy-five percent of senior company attorneys say the judicial climate in a state will impact business decisions. That's not good news, considering all the economic development initiatives underway to recruit, retain and expand business in the state. Small business and manufacturers alike are affected by meritless and excessive litigation; it's past time to make Louisiana a place where businesses want to operate.

Orleans Parish ranks as the fifth worst city or county nationally for the fairness of its legal climate. The state scored dead last in fairness of juries, impartiality and competence of judges and timeliness of summary judgment or dismissal. Louisiana was next to last in overall treatment of tort and contract litigation, damages and scientific and technical evidence. The state was 48th in meaningful venue requirements and the treatment of class action suits. The best score, at 47th, was for discovery, an issue on which meaningful reform was passed in recent years.

		"A"	"B"	"C"	"D"	"E"	Mean Grade	Ranking Within Element
Having and Enforcing Meaningful Venue Requirements	%	5	25	31	15	9	3.0	48
Overall Treatment of Tort and Contract Litigation	%	3	23	34	26	11	2.8	49
Treatment of Class Action Suits and Mass Consolidation Suits	%	5	17	22	20	7	2.9	48
Damages	%	4	19	28	30	15	2.6	49
Timeliness of Summary Judgement or Dismissal	%	7	19	29	27	15	2.7	50
Discovery	%	7	25	37	19	7	3.1	47
Scientific and Technical Evidence	%	5	18	38	20	7	2.9	49
Judge's Impartiality	%	6	19	33	20	17	2.8	50
Judge's Competence	%	4	27	41	16	7	3.1	50
Juries' Fairness	%	5	23	31	21	11	2.9	50
Overall State Grade	%	4	18	42	19	15	2.8	50

Despite some modest reforms in recent years, the perception that Louisiana has one of the worst legal climates in the country obviously persists today. But it is not just perception. Louisiana has the highest jury trial threshold in the country; a trial is only permitted for civil claims of \$50,000 or more. Despite laws passed to the contrary and rulings by the Supreme Court to curb the practice, our attorney general continues to award con-

tracts to private plaintiffs' attorneys who support his campaigns. The Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East continues to appeal the lawsuit over coastal erosion, despite the suit being dismissed and a bill clearly expressing the will of the Legislature that the suit had no merit. Legacy lawsuits continue to plague oil and gas producers.

In order to truly overcome this reputation, major changes should be made to ensure access to fair and impartial courts in the state, and in order for that to happen, the Legislature and administration must understand the importance of reforming the judicial system. The upcoming elections for statewide, legislative and other offices will provide a backdrop to delve into the topic of what real legal reform looks like.



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If Louisiana's legal climate ranking is to increase, the state must: improve the regulatory process for handling environmental lawsuits; discourage the filing of frivolous claims; eliminate the \$50,000 jury trial threshold; amend venue laws to discourage "venue shopping;" and improve judicial transparency by putting court budgets, contracts and personal financial disclosures of judges online.

Beyond the elections, the new Legislature and administration must make legal reform a priority. With term limits and retirements, the Legislature will have a turnover of at least 24 percent. The business community must be engaged – and remain vigilant – to effectively educate new members on the issue and keep the conversation relevant.

Continued interest across a broad spectrum of the business community, combined with the elections, offers the opportunity to deliver the message that legal reform must be a top priority for Louisiana. 

The report can be found here:  
[www.instituteforlegalreform.com](http://www.instituteforlegalreform.com).

The Coalition for Common Sense is comprised of more than 40 professional associations, along with a number of companies and individuals committed to passing legislation in Louisiana that ensures a fair legal climate for both truly impaired individuals and small and large businesses operating in the state. Formed in 2008, CCS plans to continue offering suggestions for improvements to Louisiana's civil justice system. For more information about business liability and legal reform in Louisiana, please visit the Coalition for Common Sense at [www.coalitionforcommonsense.com](http://www.coalitionforcommonsense.com).



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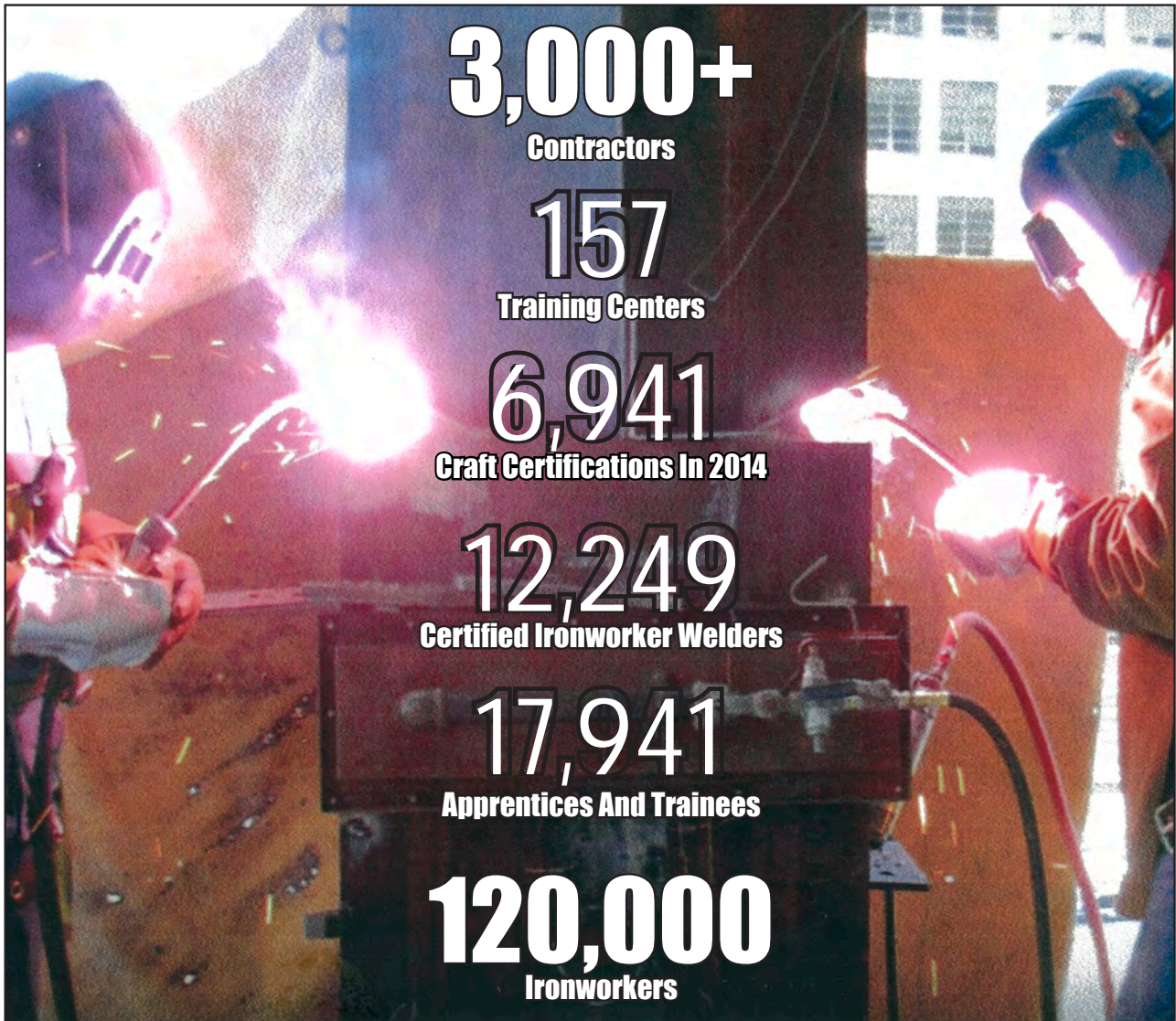
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JA's unique approach connects volunteer mentors who deliver our proven, age sequential curriculum while sharing their experiences with students. Embodying the heart of JA, our more than 218,000 classroom volunteers transform the key concepts of our lessons into a message that inspires and empowers students to believe in themselves, showing them they can make a difference in the world.

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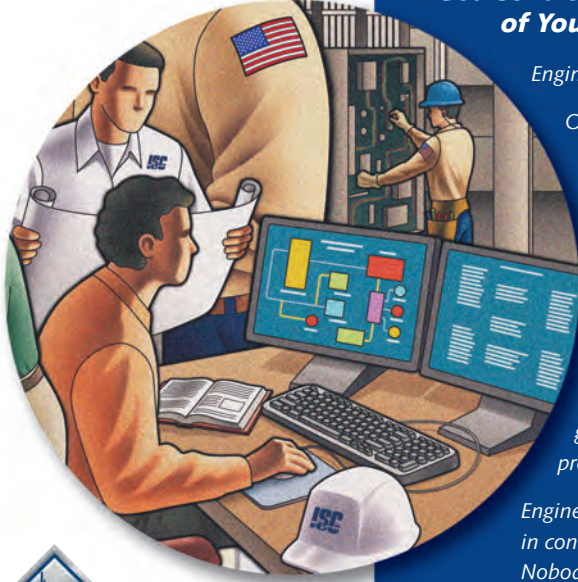
**At Junior Achievement of Greater Baton Rouge & Acadiana,** LCA - LCIA partners are key community investors in providing STEM-supporting, early financial literacy, and work readiness programs in East/West Baton Rouge, Ascension, Iberville, East/West Feliciana, Lafayette, Iberia, St. Landry, and surrounding parishes.

LCA-LCIA partners share our passion for inspiring the next generation workforce and empowering young people with strong financial skills. In 2015-16, we kick-off our "Get Hired, Stay Hired" high school initiative helping teens build workplace skills and providing job shadowing experiences through *JA Career Success®* and *JA Job Shadow™*.

**At Junior Achievement of Southwest Louisiana,** LCA - LCIA has helped provide the following STEM and work readiness programs to Calcasieu and Cameron Parish schools:

*JA Our Nation®*, *JA Finance Park®*, *JA Finance Park Virtual*, *JA Career Success*, *JA It's My Future®*, *JA Job Shadow* and *JA Reverse Job Shadow*. Approximately 2300 5th grade, middle and high school students received these programs during the 2014 - 2015 school year.

Wayne Ahrens, Westlake Chemical Lake Charles site manager and recent JASWLA Board Chairman, stated, "Having been involved in Junior Achievement for many years and being the Chairperson for the last 2 years, I continue to be impressed at how beneficial, organized and cost-effective the program is. It is wonderful to see a student grasp the financial challenges now that they will see as an adult and to recognize that they need to focus on school to be successful."



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# Junior Achievement®

*Destiny, a Baton Rouge student shares the impact her time at JA Finance Park made*

*“As a child, I always imagined what my adult life would be like. JA Finance Park was an eye-opening experience because it was significantly different from the life I imagined. I wasn’t aware that the everyday necessities cost so much. It made me appreciate my parents more and realize that budgeting is essential if I want to have a comfortable life.”*

Junior Achievement has 20+ programs focused on work readiness & STEM supporting education and in Louisiana; and, the demand for JA programs and volunteer mentors from educators is greater than we can meet. To learn more visit [www.ja.org](http://www.ja.org).

**Please consider becoming our partner, by contacting your area Junior Achievement (Louisiana) office.**

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## Have you heard *the New?*

Ranked 9th nationally in total tonnage, there's a lot of "new" these days at the deepwater Port of Greater Baton Rouge. Like **new companies** locating at the port, **new investment** in infrastructure, and **new land available** for development

- Genesis Energy, L.P. is constructing a \$150 million crude oil, intermediates and refined products import/export terminal, expanding that company's commitment to providing efficient mainstream supply and logistics services in the region.
- Drax Biomass, one of Europe's biggest renewable electricity generators, has launched its \$30 million wood pellet storage and transfer operation.
- Stupp Coatings, LLC has constructed a facility on 24 acres at the port's Inland Rivers Marine Terminal to operate concrete weight pipeline coating services for the oil and gas industry. The site is serviced by rail, truck and barge.
- Louis Dreyfus Commodities is successfully operating its new grain dock and export grain elevator.
- Westway Terminals, LLC has completed its \$3.5 million expansion at the port's liquid bulk terminal.
- Acreage at the port's Inland Rivers Marine Terminal is available for development, with access to the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

***For the full story, just give us a call and ask, "What's new?"***  
**Contact Greg Johnson, Director of Business Development, at 225.342.1660.**



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