



# Global Link

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## Letter from the Executive Director

Dear MSWTC Member,

The first quarter of 2006 was extremely active and productive for the MSWTC staff and its partners. In January, the final results of the 2005 International Business Survey of 1,457 companies were reported and the *Executive Summary: Derivatives and Conclusions for Mississippi's SME's* was posted on the website for review by the membership. Staff participation in regional meetings concentrating on technology and international development efforts in the Mississippi Delta generated new ideas for programs and services to assist all areas of the state. The initial day-long session of USM's five-part "Exporting Mississippi" series kicked off with great success and with accolades given to the MSWTC for its efforts in marketing the program to small businesses.

February and March were dominated by legislative receptions, conferences, and planning sessions for future events. Of special significance was the attendance of MSWTC Board President Richard Hickson and Executive Board Member Leland Speed at the Mississippi Intermodal Council's (MIC) Legislative Breakfast where both spoke in support of the intermodal concept and the joint legislative work being done on behalf of the MIC, the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA), and the Mississippi World Trade Center. April brings a renewed emphasis on membership with a recruitment reception planned in Tupelo as a piggy-back activity aligned with MDA's "Import Essentials" seminar.

There is much to look forward to in the months ahead. In answer to the question "Where are we going?" I would report that we are planning more targeted programs based on the 2005 international business survey results, increased membership, and increased use of technology. In answer to the question "How do we plan to get there?" my response would be that we will elicit more active Board participation, more partnerships, more strategic action planning, and put ourselves in the position of being able to take advantage of grant opportunities.

2006 started with a big bang. The MSWTC Board of Directors, Advisory Board, and staff intend to stay focused and flowing in the positive direction established during our five previous years of successful operation. Our basic plan for effective global business development is to work smart and consistently educate which in-turn will certainly produce the best results for you, our members.

Sincerely,

Barbara Travis  
Executive Director

## INTERNATIONAL EVENTS SCHEDULE

3/17-18	Latin American AHEC Convention (Hard Wood) Guadalajara, Mexico
3/26-4/7	South American Catalog Show Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay
3/27-30	Interzum Guangzhou (Wood Products) Guangzhou, China
3/30	Banking on Development New Orleans, LA
4/4-8	FEICON 2006 (Wood Products) Sao Paulo, Brazil
4/6	Import Seminar Tupelo, MS
4/6-7	World Trade Day Conference Pensacola, FL
4/21	Exporting Mississippi Series Hattiesburg, MS
4/23-27	Interbuild Catalog Show Birmingham, UK
4/25-26	Joint MS Water Resources Meeting Jackson, MS
5/4	Open House - MS Export Assistance Center Jackson, MS
5/5	Exporting Mississippi Series Hattiesburg, MS
6/12-15	Global Petroleum Show Calgary, Canada
6/TBA	Mexico Trade Mission Guadalajara, Monterrey & Mexico City
7/19-21	MEDC Summer Conference Tunica, MS
8/2-4	MS Water Resources Annual Meeting
10/28-11/2	WTCA General Assembly Istanbul, Turkey
11/TBA	MSWTC Annual Meeting Jackson, MS

Call 601-353-0909 for event details or go online at [www.mswtc.org](http://www.mswtc.org).

## MSWTC Director Attends North American WTC Meeting



WTCA President

On February 3-4, sixty-five delegates representing 39 WTCs in Canada, Mexico and the United States attended the WTCA North American Regional Meeting hosted by WTC Tacoma. Many of the delegates arrived on February 2 to attend WTC Tacoma's Globe Awards Dinner where WTCA President Guy Tozzoli provided the keynote remarks to over 400 attendees.

The North American meeting opened on February 3 with a roundtable discussion where a representative from each WTC commented on its programs and activities. To allow such a large group to share as much information as possible, each WTC was asked to submit a one-page summary of their organization including ownership, staffing, annual budget and major activities. The afternoon included tours of the ports of Tacoma and Seattle and a dinner hosted by the Port of Seattle, port officials and WTC Seattle board members in their Holland America Line dining room.

The full-day session on February 4 included panels on finding and rewarding sponsors, board development and selecting good board members, lucrative partner relationships and creating inexpensive newsletters. Participants were briefed on the latest upgrades to the WISERTrade trade statistics program by representatives from WISER.

They also heard a presentation by National Community Development Services on Establishing a Five-Year Funding Process. The event closed with a reception at the Tacoma Club hosted by the Canadian Consulate General in Seattle.

Andreas Udbye and the staff at the WTC Tacoma did an outstanding job of organizing and hosting the largest delegation to ever attend a North American meeting – and their cheerful hospitality more than overshadowed the gray skies of the northwest during the event. The Mississippi World Trade Center has proposed to host the 2007 meeting.

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## International Business Survey Results

During the Summer of 2005, the MSWTC's Business Development and Education Committees jointly developed an International Business Survey designed to identify stumbling blocks to international trade for the state's small and medium enterprises (SME's). The survey instrument was mailed to 1,427 companies and received a 9% response ratio despite the coinciding aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The resulting data is being used in conjunction with ongoing primary interview research to develop targeted training, information and client services that address the most common barriers firms face in finding, entering, and expanding their global markets.

The survey questions were designed to assess Mississippi businesses' needs for successful entry into foreign markets. The goal was to learn about the international business interests of Mississippi firms and the issues that deter them from conducting business abroad, developing global partnerships and facilitating joint ventures. The answers to the survey questions aligned with prior research, but also shed light on new approaches to old problems.

## International Business Survey Results (continued)

From the 124 reporting companies, here are what Mississippi's SME's reported as their top twelve barriers to conducting international business:

1. Finding Foreign Markets/Buyers
2. Financing Issues
3. Basic Import/Export Process
4. Logistics/Transportation
5. Culture/Protocol
6. Tariffs
7. Intellectual Property
8. Management Experience
9. Technology
10. Product Modification
11. Capacity
12. Management Commitment

The findings of this survey are being used by the Mississippi World Trade Center and its partners to develop a benchmark for educational programs, services and global strategies that can enhance the productivity and profitability of Mississippi firms. We will start at the top and work through the list to address the most pressing international needs of the business community. Additional input from companies or individuals engaged in global trade is welcomed and encouraged. [Click here](#) to view the full report.

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## Member Spotlight



John Hendrix

Congratulations to Mississippi World Trade Center Advisory Board Member John Hendrix on his recent completion of Duke University's Global Executive MBA program and the receipt of his Masters of Business Administration from the Fuqua School of Business in December 2005.

The consistently high-ranked program is designed for international executives with at least 10 years of business experience. It combines unique residential sessions in Asia, South America, Europe and the United States with Internet-enabled distance learning. During the program, participants visited four continents with extended stays in Moscow, Brussels, Beijing, Bangkok, Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires.

Hendrix has been the Director of Economic Development for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians for the past 12 years. During his tenure with the Tribe, John has been involved in a variety of projects including industrial recruitment, land-use planning, commercial development, and project financing for more than \$500 million in investments.

## Export Finance Seminar a Success



On March 8, the Mississippi World Trade Center presented “The Secrets of Successful Trade Financing” an intensive one-day seminar covering the fundamentals of export finance. Attendees from across the state gained a clearer understanding of how to utilize financing tools in their global business transactions. A special thanks to event sponsors Regions Bank and Trade Technologies, Inc. for making the event possible.



The decision to organize the event came from the recently completed International Business Survey which showed a need for international finance related training. The seminar was taught by Chip Thomas, Director of Training for *The American Export Training Institute (AETI)*, which is noted as America’s foremost resource for international trade transactions since 1995. For a list of upcoming international events around the state, visit the Mississippi World Trade Center website at <http://www.mswtc.org>.

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## 2005 Trade Statistics

The value of Mississippi’s worldwide merchandise exports reached a record high in 2005 totaling \$4,007,570,892 and representing a 26.05% increase over 2004. Vehicles, chemicals, electrical machinery and machinery were among Mississippi’s top export sectors and Canada, Mexico, and Belgium held their places as the state’s leading export markets.

Several of Mississippi’s export categories experienced tremendous growth in 2005. Shipments of vehicles increased almost 250% to a total of over \$737 million. Electrical machinery, mainly integrated circuits and semiconductors, totaled \$385 billion, a 185.26% increase and mineral fuel & oil totaled \$238 million, a 151.59% increase.

Total U.S. exports totaled \$904 billion in 2005 representing an increase of 10.57%. With over \$4 billion worth of exports in 2005, Mississippi ranked 7<sup>th</sup> overall in terms of percentage increased with an increase of 26.05%. Mississippi ranked 36<sup>th</sup> in the United States in terms of total exports, up one spot from 2004 and just behind Oklahoma and Vermont who both had under \$4.5 billion worth of exports in 2005.

[Click here](#) to view the full report.

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## Welcome New Members!

Lex Taylor, Taylor Machine Works, Inc.

East Mississippi Business Development Corporation