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Alabama Development Office

## Container Deal Biggest In State Docks History

MOBILE -- State Docks Director Jimmy Lyons says once fully functional, a new container terminal announced this month could boost the Port of Mobile to be one of the nation's top 10 ports.

Two of the world's largest container shipping companies have struck a 30-year agreement with the Alabama State Port Authority, completing the most valuable deal in the history of the state docks and promising new jobs and trading opportunities for Mobile.

A joint venture company-Mobile Container Terminal LLC- will be formed as a result of the deal. The firm will be 80 percent run by APM Terminals North America Inc., a subsidiary of the A.P. Moller-Maersk Group, and 20 percent run by Terminal Link S.A., a division of CMA CGM S.A.



*Pictured , from left, are: Frank Baragona, president, CMA CGM America, Inc.; Tony Scioscia, president of APM Terminals North America; Gov. Bob Riley; Tim Parker, chairman, Alabama State Port Authority Board of Directors; Congressman Joe Bonner, First District-Alabama; and Jimmy Lyons, director and chief executive officer of the Alabama State Port Authority.*

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## 300 Jobs Coming to Muscle Shoals

MUSCLE SHOALS -- North American Lighting, a manufacturer of tail lamps for automobiles, announced plans this month to invest \$21 million to build a factory in Muscle Shoals and hire more than 300 employees.

The company will construct a 200,000-square-foot factory in an industrial park adjacent to Northwest Alabama Regional Airport. North American Lighting is expected to begin operations in June 2007 and produce 1.8 million tail lamps a year by 2010.

North American Lighting's parent company is Japan-based Koito Manufacturing Company, which is 20 percent owned by Toyota Motor Corporation. Koito has been looking for a site to build its fourth North American factory by the end of this year as Toyota, Nissan Motor Company and Honda Motor Company, Japan's three largest car makers, are selling more cars in the United States.

## Riley Welcomes 200 New Jobs to Gadsden



*Gov. Riley, right, congratulates company officials, from left, Alex Ghodsi, executive vice president, and Fred Campana, owner and president.*

GADSDEN -- Gov. Bob Riley and city officials welcomed a new manufacturing plant here that will create 200 new jobs. Capital investment is \$9.5 million.

Rigid Building Systems manufactures pre-engineered metal buildings and components. The Houston, Texas-based company is locating its new plant in the Gadsden Airport Industrial Park.

## Austal Breaks Ground

MOBILE -- Mobile-based Austal USA celebrated the grand opening of its Northern Expansion facility with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The new facility will be used to construct the General Dynamics/Austal team's winning design of the Littoral Combat Ship. (LCS).

## Birmingham Researchers Get Top Drug Patents

BIRMINGHAM -- Southern Research Institute of Birmingham has yielded six of the top 26 federally-approved cancer drugs, with six more in the pipeline and 26 patents pending.

## Alabama Companies Invited To Trade Meeting

Alabama business leaders interested in doing business with Central America, and in particular Guatemala and Honduras, are invited to attend one of several informational luncheon meetings to be held throughout the state in January.

The Alabama Development Office (ADO) and the state's Export Alabama Trade Alliance are organizing a trade mission to Guatemala City, Guatemala, and San Pedro Sula, Honduras. The trip is scheduled for May 14-20.

The mission will focus on matching participating Alabama companies with qualified agents, distributors, representatives, end-users and joint venture partners in the Alabama companies' respective markets. Specifically, the trip will cater to companies interested in entering these Central American markets and educating themselves about opportunities made possible by the Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement.

### Riley Awards \$1.6 Million For New Training Program

MONTGOMERY -- Gov. Bob Riley has awarded \$1.6 million for a pilot program to train workers for jobs in industrial maintenance and machine tool technology.

The grant will establish the Center for Manufacturing Innovation at Calhoun Community College in Morgan County. An initial group of 30 students will be tested and selected to take part in the program, which provides advanced training in manufacturing processes through a series of short-term sessions called modules.

"This grant provides an opportunity for workers to prepare themselves for jobs in high-skill and high-demand industries," Gov. Riley said. "I'm pleased to fund a program that will equip participants for professional success."

### Container Deal May Provide Up To 500 New Jobs

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Mobile Container Terminal will invest up to \$150 million in building and operating the Choctaw Point container terminal, a \$300 million state docks project under construction just south of downtown Mobile.

When the facility opens in 2007, it could provide an estimated 300 marine terminal jobs and officials said the number of permanent jobs could reach 500. "Today the port is probably more important than it has ever been," Gov. Bob Riley said at the announcement.

A meeting will be held in Birmingham at the Birmingham Regional Chamber of Commerce on January 11th. A meeting will be held in Mobile at the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce on January 10th and a Huntsville meeting will be held at the Huntsville-Madison County Chamber of Commerce on January 12th. The sessions will last from 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. Although there is no cost to attend, reservations are requested.

For more information, contact Beau Lore of ADO at (334) 353-0299 or e-mail him at [lorej@ado.state.al.us](mailto:lorej@ado.state.al.us)



*ADO Project Manager Gary Faulkner, right, presents the Great Seal of Alabama to Keith Hasty and Diane Hasty of Best-Foam Fabricators.*

### Best Foam Fabricators To Locate in Rogersville

ROGERSVILLE -- Best-Foam Fabricators Inc. has announced plans to locate its manufacturing operations here in a 54,000-square-foot facility near the Rogersville Industrial Park. Capital investment for the project is \$2.4 million and the company will employ 32 people within the next three years.

The project is expected to begin production during the first quarter of 2006. The company produces protective packaging containers and other products for the automotive and defense industries.

"We are proud to be consolidating our Mississippi and Illinois manufacturing plants in Rogersville," said company President Keith Hasty. "This location was selected for its proximity to our customer base, availability of human resources, and good highway access."

## Hyundai Gives 17 Cars to Alabama Schools

MONTGOMERY -- Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Alabama, LLC. (HMMA) has turned over the keys of 17 brand new 2006 NF Sonatas to Alabama secondary schools and two-year colleges, the first in a series of donations by the Montgomery-based manufacturing plant. The cars will be used as training vehicles in automotive programs throughout the state, most of which are certified by the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation.

"We understand the value and importance of a well-trained workforce and are pleased to present these vehicles to assist in Alabama's educational programs," said Greg Kimble, director of human resources for HMMA. "The donation is a part of our continuing efforts to train Alabama's future workforce for careers in the automotive industry."

The first in this series of donations went to schools within a 50 to 75 mile radius of the Montgomery-based plant. Subsequent donations will be expanded to include schools across the state.

The pre-production vehicles are for educational and training purposes only and are not for operation on public roads. M1 vehicles are disassembled during training, and schools receiving the donations are instructed on the purpose and final disposition of the vehicles.

Gordon Allen, an automotive instructor at the Autauga County Technology Center, said Hyundai's contribution is substantial. He said his students have been working with cars that rolled out of the factory about the time President Clinton took office. "It's like going from a Model T to a space shuttle," Allen said of the progress made in the industry during that time. "It's really unreal what's taking place, with so many electronic controls in modern cars."

Timothy Strong, an instructor at Selma High School, said having the Sonata will get his students out of the textbooks and into a live environment where real learning can take place.



## UAH Engineering Program Earns Top Ranking

HUNTSVILLE -- The graduate level engineering management program at the University of Alabama at Huntsville has been singled out as being the best in the nation by the American Society for Engineering Management (ASEM).

Engineering management is a discipline that integrates technical engineering and project system management skills to prepare students to lead people, projects and teams.

"We have an outstanding engineering management faculty and their active participation helps bring exceptional and innovative concepts to the classroom," said Dr. James Swain, chairman of UAH's Industrial Systems Engineering and Engineering Management program. "These practices are then passed along to our students and this better prepares them for a career in engineering management."

### *Pike County Breaks Ground For Business Incubator*

TROY -- The Pike County Economic Development Corp.,(EDC) board members and area officials recently broke ground on a business incubator at the Troy Industrial Park South. The new facility will house the Pike County EDC and serve as a resource for entrepreneurs looking to expand their businesses.

Classes and seminars will be held for incubator clients, as well as anyone interested. The project, which is being funded with the help of USDA and ADECA, is scheduled to be completed by Spring 2006. For more information, contact the Pike County EDC at (334) 670-2272.



*Pike County officials break ground for the new business incubator.*