



2022-2023

Business insider



TENNESSEE CHAMBER
of Commerce & Industry

TENNESSEE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

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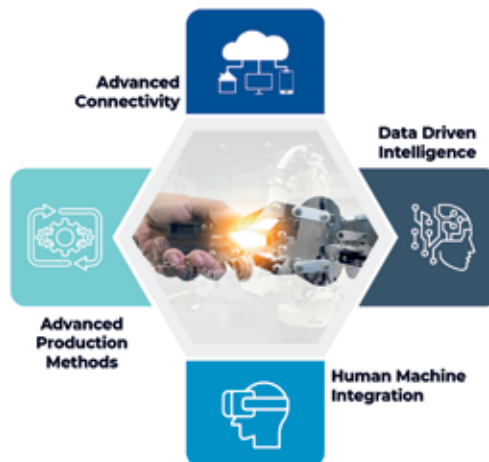
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COVER: As the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry strives to be the voice of business and manufacturing at the Tennessee Capitol, the Chamber works with industry leaders and legislators to impact policy to promote a positive business environment.

Why some of Tennessee's most prominent businesses are members of the Tennessee Chamber.

“

“As one of Tennessee's largest employers, HCA Healthcare TriStar Health is proud to be a member of the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Their work impacting policy in the Tennessee General Assembly matters greatly as Tennessee strives to be one of the strongest states in the nation for business. We would encourage all businesses in all sectors and sizes to be a member and stay engaged.”

**HCA Healthcare
TriStar Division President,
Mitch Edgeworth**

“

“As one of Tennessee's largest manufacturers, we greatly appreciate the Chamber's leadership on crucial policy issues, and we know their work has made a great difference in contributing to the state's strong manufacturing climate. Whether it is tax, workforce policies and initiatives, or other areas that impact our operations, we know the Chamber and manufacturers association provide strong leadership and engagements that benefit all manufacturers.”

**McKee Foods Corporation
Government Relations
Manager, Connie Vaughan**

“

“The Tennessee Chamber is a crucial and trusted partner with us here at FedEx. As a member company for a number of years, we not only appreciate their work to impact public policy but also the events, seminars, and safety trainings they conduct across the state that are crucial to so many Tennessee employers.”

**FedEx Corporation
Vice President, A.J. Sain**

TENNESSEE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

THE VOICE OF TENNESSEE BUSINESS

Impacting Policy for 100+ years

Since 1912, the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry has maintained a consistent, singular focus: to be the voice of business and manufacturing on matters of public policy in the Tennessee General Assembly. As a private, not-for-profit organization, we fund our operations from dues of member companies and organizations that are committed to enhancing and maintaining Tennessee's strong business climate.

Tennessee Leads as a Top State for Business

This issue of the Chamber's Business Insider magazine highlights those who are dedicated to keeping Tennessee successful. Many know Tennessee for its traditional tourism staples such as country music, Memphis BBQ, world-famous whiskey, and the Great Smoky Mountains. However, Tennessee's economic landscape continues to diversify and exponentially grow with other significant business and economic industries substantially increasing their presences, such as manufacturing, technology, and healthcare.

Tennessee is known for its low cost of living, small tax burden, and a friendly business climate. As a result, each year businesses decide to relocate to Tennessee, while existing businesses continue expanding their existing operations. However, efforts have been somewhat hindered by employee shortages and general workforce challenges, as they are a significant concern for Tennessee employers. The Chamber and the business community have experienced success in improving some of these issues and are committed to continuing to build on our success in the future.

In the following pages, we highlight how various industries serve as a driving force in our increasingly diverse economy. We illustrate stories from Jack Daniel's history to Tennessee's nationally competitive tax landscape. Turning to technology and manufacturing, we underscore how Tennessee is leading in electric vehicle and automobile manufacturing. Tennessee is home to five of the world's largest original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) who are transforming Tennessee's economy and future as they doubly reside at the forefront of transforming how the world commutes and travels daily.

Other highlights include an overview of the Tennessee Chamber's history and the paramount work the Chamber does to continue fostering historical investments, diversifying our state's economy, and representing the entire business community in Tennessee. We also highlight women leadership in manufacturing, a local chamber from each grand division, and a preview of our upcoming events. I want to express my gratitude to all Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry members. We appreciate your support of business in Tennessee and your commitment to ensuring that our elected leaders listen and understand our positions when considering public policy that impacts our operations. We hope you enjoy the 2022/2023 edition of our Business Insider.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Billy Gubler". The signature is fluid and cursive.

President & CEO,
Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry



Staying Ahead and Preparing for Future Economic Growth

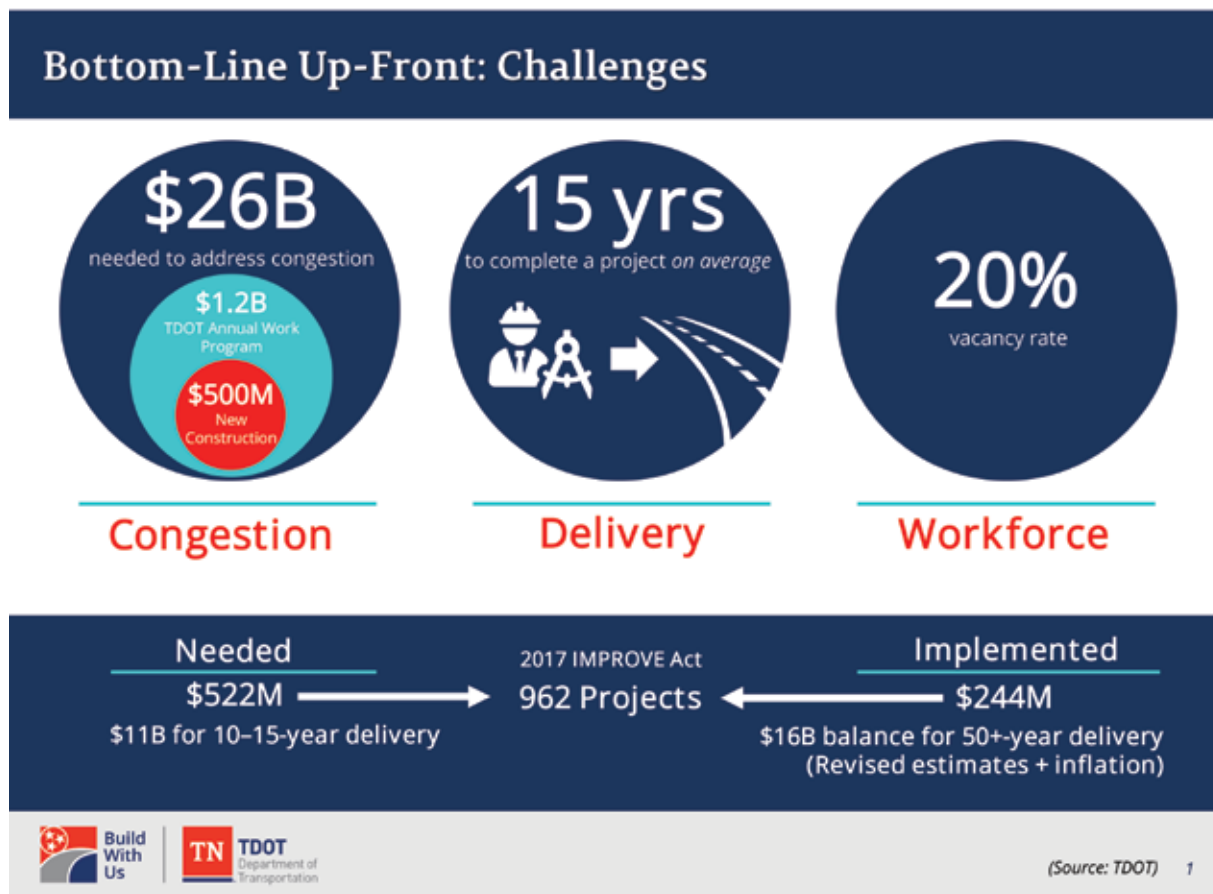
Infrastructure investments and tax policy are key to Tennessee's continued economic growth

By Bradley Jackson, Karrington Anderson, Laura Leigh Harris, and Zach Roberts

Tennessee is blessed because of the consistent vision of our elected officials and their work to enhance our business climate. As the Tennessee Chamber has worked for over 100 years to impact public policy in the halls of our state Capitol, we have and will remain focused on the guidance and input of our members. Quite simply, our elected leaders must focus on those things that improve our current business climate and prepare for our future growth. Unique to Tennessee, businesses and elected leaders have done a tremendous job in creating one of the strongest business climates in the nation and the results are showing. As business leaders look ahead there are a few themes that we continue to hear through surveys and feedback.

INFRASTRUCTURE: With Tennessee's tremendous economic growth, aging and future infrastructure needs are something businesses frequently emphasize. Infrastructure is vitally important as it impacts business operations, logistics, and transportation, as well as employee and community health and safety. Recently Governor Bill Lee announced the Build with Us initiative which proposes over \$1.5 billion in annual infrastructure investments to maintain competitiveness. When considering congestion trends, TDOT anticipates commute times will increase by 60% by 2045. We know that Tennessee must stay ahead of our growth and infrastructure demand in all areas of our state in rural, suburban, and urban areas. The Tennessee Chamber supports significant investments in Tennessee's infrastructure system to help our business climate

(Staying Ahead, page 8)



Governor Bill Lee shared information regarding infrastructure priorities at the Tennessee Department of Transportation Build With Us presentation.

Staying Ahead

(continued from page 7)

and Tennesseans. We appreciate bold policy steps to accomplish this.

TAX POLICY: Tennessee is known for having one of the lowest and most competitive tax structures for individuals in the entire nation. At the core of low taxes for individuals is the constitutional absence of a state income tax passed by voters in 2008. In fact, the Tennessee General Assembly, working with current and past gover-

nors, focused on tax cuts that have enhanced this distinction. The historically prudent and fiscally responsible efforts of Tennessee lawmakers over the past decade have led to significant tax cuts for individuals, such as abolishing the inheritance tax, the hall income tax, and most of professions taxed by the professional privilege tax. Overall, the tenacious efforts of the General Assembly to reduce the tax burden on individual Tennesseans will save individuals an approximate \$784.7 million in Fiscal Year 2022-2023, alone.

The philosophy of both the Chamber and business community has remained simple

but effective: create a business and tax environment that facilitates economic growth to generate the revenue needs of our state government and avoid tax increases. Overall, research suggests the tax burden on businesses in the Volunteer state, when compared to other states is sometimes not aligned when it comes to Franchise and Excise tax (F&E), local property taxes on both real and tangible property, unemployment taxes, and the local business or gross receipts tax. Regarding the F&E tax, Tennessee has one of the highest rates in the Southeast at 6.5% and according to the 2022 Tax Foundation's Facts

and Figures report, ranks 13th highest in the nation in per capita collections. These and other reports highlight what the Chamber has long advocated: businesses pay their fair share and drive Tennessee's state and local growth, not just through F&E tax payments but also many other taxes. Lawmakers highlight the importance of a competitive and fair tax structure as proposals. Businesses come and stay in Tennessee because our elected leaders are making strides in improving individual and business tax climates. Tennessee must always remain competitive as a premier destination for business.



Gov. Bill Lee shares information about infrastructure and tax policy at the Build With Us presentation hosted by the Tennessee Department of Transportation.



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By Claire Hill

Carolyn Hardy's first attempt in business was selling greeting cards at 12 years old. The experience was the first of many successes on her journey to becoming chief executive officer of Chism Hardy Investments and Hardy Beverages.

High Achievers

Carolyn Hardy and LaDon Byars forging their own way in manufacturing

Memphis businesswoman Carolyn Hardy earns recognition for professional acumen

Carolyn Hardy knew from an early age the value of assertiveness and emo-

tional intelligence, skillsets that she has worked tirelessly to develop as a successful Memphis businesswoman. At 12 years old, Carolyn, and her sister Debra, sold greeting cards that had been collecting dust in their

Memphis home. The endeavor was Carolyn's first taste of entrepreneurship, and she fell in love with the challenges that a business career brings.

Carolyn, former chair of the Memphis Area Chamber of

Commerce Board of Directors, started her professional career working at J.M. Smucker Company, where she began her climb on the corporate ladder. She was the first African American accountant at the Memphis

facility for J.M. Smucker Company and over time worked her way through the ranks into the role of plant manager.

"I was an accountant, quality manager, human resources manager, and eventually the plant manager at J.M. Smucker Company before I was recruited to work for Coors Brewing Company," says Carolyn. "I wanted to be the best that I could be in business and knew that I needed to understand people and operations to be successful."

Today, Carolyn focuses her time on Chism Hardy Investments and is the founder of Hardy Beverages, where she brings her knowledge of world-class manufacturing processes, finance, and logistics to support the growth of the company.

"There was no one in my community that looked like me that was a businesswoman," says Carolyn. "I took that as a challenge and embraced my college years learning as much as I could, not only about accounting but business as a whole through marketing classes, law classes, and more."

Carolyn has a bachelor's in business administration with a focus on accounting, as well as her Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Memphis, and is a certified public accountant.

"If you want to own your own business one day, you can't go wrong with an accounting degree," says Carolyn. "Business owners need to understand the financials, know how to sell products, and recognize how to reward people."

Carolyn says that the manufacturing industry is challenging, but also rewarding.

"The hours are long and grueling, especially as a plant manager," says Carolyn. "I made sure I was present throughout the three shifts at the plant, because no matter what shift the employees worked, they were an important aspect of our success, and

I wanted them to understand that."

As she began her work in manufacturing, Carolyn noted the lack of female mentorship and overall opportunity. She had to work to develop relationships and find men that would mentor her, and she had to

constantly demand respect as she was often the only female in the room.

"You have to work hard to not take yourself so seriously," says Carolyn. "You also must learn to be your best cheerleader."

Carolyn also says that you can never stop learning and de-

veloping your leadership skills and knowledge of the industry.

Today, Carolyn is a role model for women and is involved in multiple nonprofit organizations. She is currently Deputy Chair of the Federal Reserve 8th District, former chair of

(Achievers, page 12)



While women make up 47% of the workforce in the United States, they make up only 30% of the 15.8 million people employed in the manufacturing sector, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST), and only 1 in 4 manufacturing leaders are women. Still, the sector holds great potential. A 2018 Deloitte and The Manufacturing Institute Skills Gap and Future of Work Study estimated the need for as many as 2.4 million jobs in the sector by 2028. Women will be equally qualified to fill those roles.

Achievers

(continued from page 11)

the Federal Reserve Memphis Branch, and volunteers with the New Memphis Institute, Greater Memphis Chamber, Soulsville/Stax Foundation, University of Memphis, serves as chair of the Methodist LeBonheur Hospital Systems, Mayor Action Committee, Philanthropic Black Women of Memphis, and Crews Venture Lab. She is also the Founder of the Industrial Readiness Training program at Southwest Tennessee Community College to support Memphis manufacturing companies. She's also the chair of the Society of Entrepreneurs.

Her experiences and insight inspired Carolyn to write a leadership book titled "Look Up," which was published in 2019 and details her five principles for intentional leadership.

"You have to be all in and can't be distracted to succeed in manufacturing," says Carolyn. "Winning at brand building and manufacturing is no different than running a race on the track field — if you are distracted, you won't win."

LaDon Byars, owner of Colonial Diversified Polymer Products LLC, leverages accounting degree to find rewarding career in manufacturing

Manufacturing has long played a pivotal role in the United States' economic

might, and that influence has strengthened the local communities and state economies where businesses have flourished. LaDon Byars of Colonial Diversified Polymer Products (DPP) in Dyersburg can testify to this fact firsthand.

With a career that spans more than 30 years, LaDon has worked in a variety of roles, learning about manufacturing after obtaining her bachelor's degree in accounting from Louisiana Tech University and getting her certification as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA).


"I see the relationship from accounting to manufacturing much better with my background than I would with a general business degree," says

LaDon. "The basic principles of accounting have helped me manage my manufacturing concerns, and I have a true understanding of the potential of the business."

LaDon says that while one isn't required to have an accounting degree to prove successful in manufacturing, she stresses that it helps lay the groundwork by providing the ability to examine the financial challenges of the process.

Today, LaDon serves as president and chief executive officer of Colonial Diversified Polymer Products, LLC, one of North America's most diverse rubber suppliers.

With partners from different industries such as automotive,



"I have worked for more than 30 years to be in the position I'm in now," says LaDon. "My family didn't give me this business or this position. I had to learn and work hard to be where I am."

defense, commercial building, construction, farm equipment, aerospace, computers, medical, telecommunications, recreation, health, entertainment, plumbing, refrigeration, and many more, Colonial DPP's parts are used around the world.

"I find the manufacturing industry extremely rewarding," says LaDon. "I want to be an example to my children by showcasing the many jobs in manufacturing and the impact our industry has on our local and state economy."

LaDon was often the only female in the room as she was learning the business, but attributes her success to the previous management team for taking a chance on a young female accountant.

"A gentleman who originally did not hire me became one of my biggest mentors," says LaDon. "Being a female in manufacturing is not always easy and finding a mentor and continuing to develop your skill set is key to achieving your goals in this industry."

LaDon is a big proponent of the manufacturing sector, and she emphasizes the opportunity available for individuals with varying levels of education and skills.

"We don't necessarily need an entire workforce of college-educated individuals – it's important to have a mix for the economy's success," she says.

The need for a skilled workforce with a diversity of skills and education has been magnified by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Over time, working in the manufacturing industry has not been given the respect it deserved," she says.

LaDon says that often people assume that Colonial DPP is a family business and that's why she, as a female, is the president and chief executive officer.

"I have worked for more than 30 years to be in the position I'm in now," says LaDon. "My family

didn't give me this business or this position. I had to learn and work hard to be where I am."

Colonial DPP primarily focuses on automotive parts, however, as demand for automobiles fluctuates, a diversified product mix helps their business continue to be successful.

Colonial DPP is a certified Woman Owned Small Business by the Small Business Administration (SBA), and LaDon

attributes her success to staying informed and abreast of industry regulations and policies that could impact the business.

"If you keep your priorities in line and continue to develop your faith and family relationships, then the things you do in the manufacturing industry will be incredibly rewarding," she says.

LaDon is affiliated with the United States Department of Commerce -NIST Manufactur-

ing Extension Partnership and serves as national advisory board member. She also serves as an advisory board member for the University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services, and serves as the chairman of the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry Manufacturing Excellence Council. She has eight children, three grandchildren, and is active in her church.



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A crucial function of the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry/Tennessee Manufacturers Association is to positively impact public policy and support pro-business candidates. Through our annual policy agendas and legislative scorecards, we work to hold legislators accountable for their support of Tennessee Chamber members; in turn, we recognize that support through our PAC.

The Tennessee Chamber competes with a number of groups that do not share our vision of economic freedom and prosperity. Any amount you choose to give helps the Tennessee Chamber work on your behalf. All PAC contributions go to those candidates who are allies of the business community.

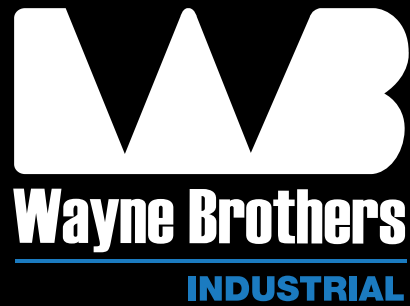
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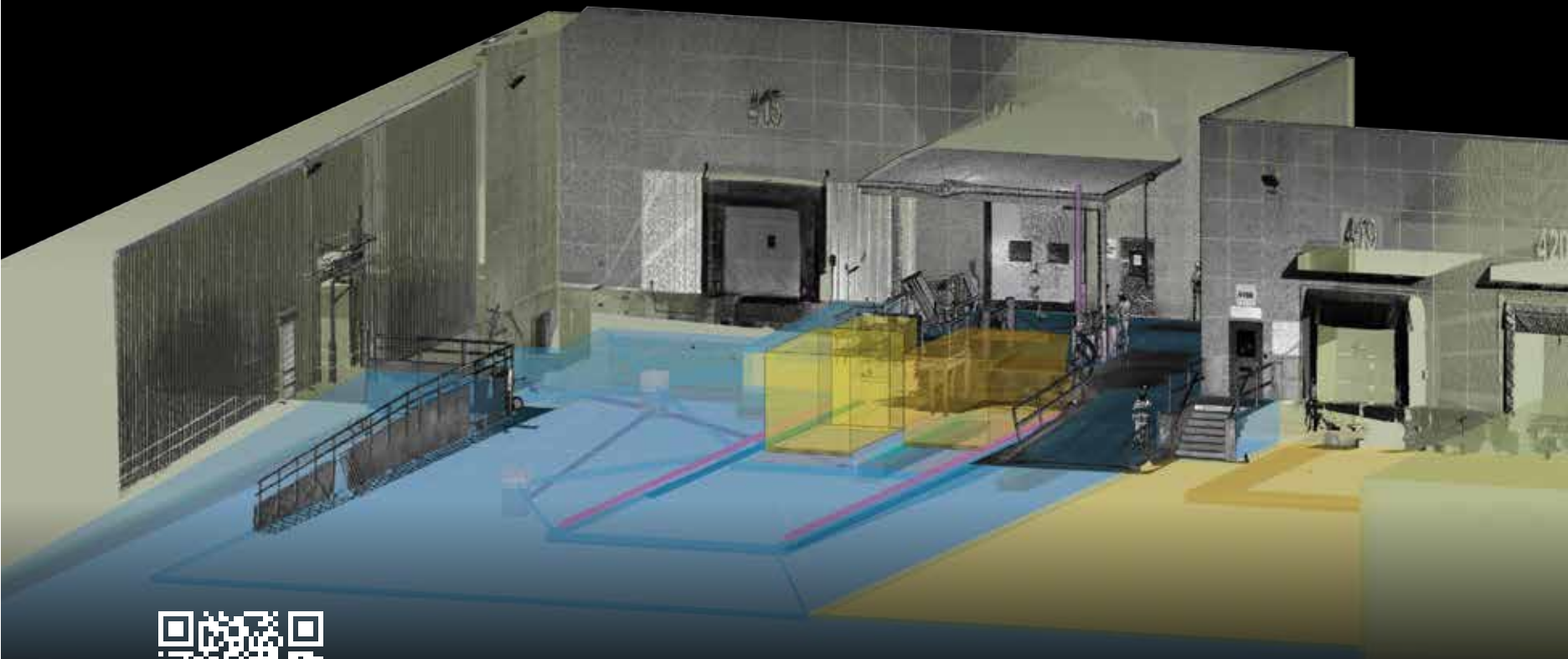


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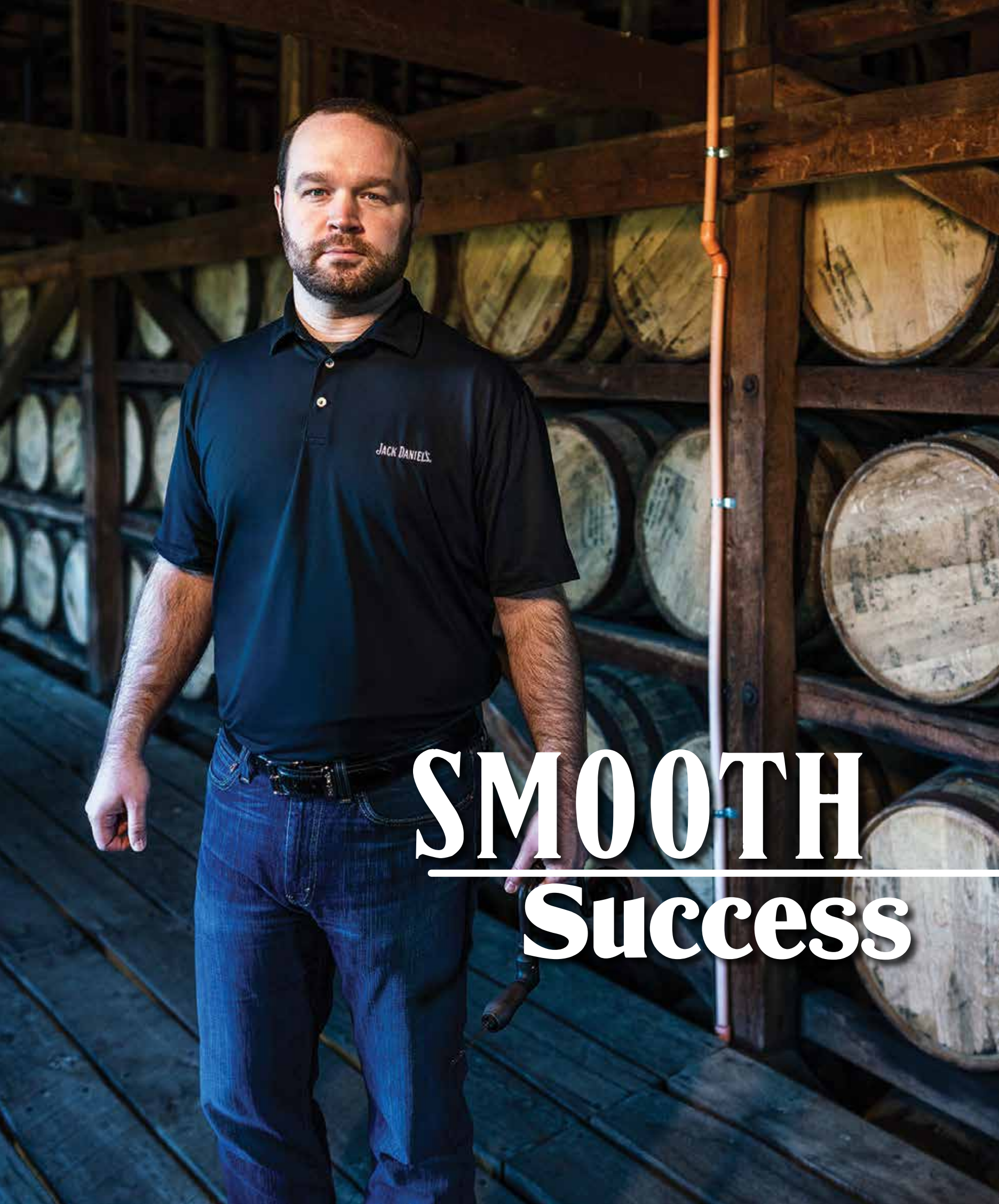
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JACK DANIEL'S

SMOOTH Success

The iconic Jack Daniel's brand relies on its Tennessee roots and authentic character to promote its world-renowned products

By Cara Moore

Jack Daniel's is known worldwide as the premium brand of Tennessee whiskey. Sold in more than 170 countries, the powerhouse brand, known for its distinctive black label and the square bottle that contains the smooth-tasting amber liquid, is inextricably linked to Tennessee and the quaint town of Lynchburg in the state's second smallest county.

The town, its residents, and the distillery's workers have been featured prominently in the brand's advertising and marketing efforts. And the brand is justifiably proud of its roots.

"The history of Jack Daniel's shares many similarities with the founding of our state," says Larry Combs, senior vice president, and global director for the Jack Daniel's supply chain. "It was born from the self-starting, 'pull yourself up by your bootstraps' type of work ethic, which resonates with our audience."

The brand's success is attributable to not only its consistent taste, he says, but also to its characteristic distilling process, the company's loyal workforce, and the rural nature and authentic character of the brand.

But how did a young, Lynchburg native, born in the 1840s,

gain such a loyal following for his whiskey?

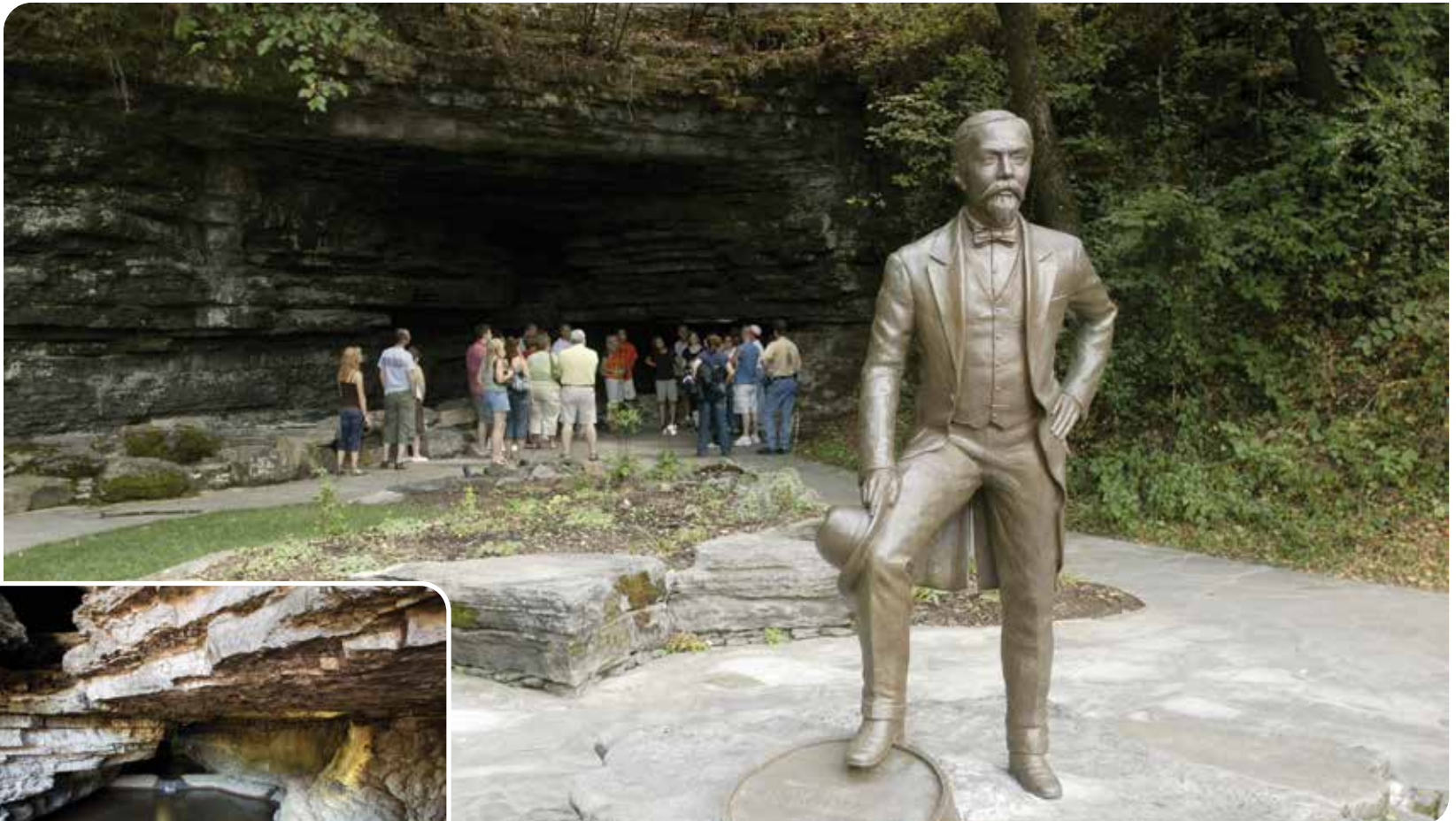
Jasper "Jack" Daniel, for whom the distillery was named, first learned the art of whiskey-making from Reverend Dan Call and Nathan "Nearest" Green after leaving his home at the age of 10. After the Civil War, Jack established his own distillery and moved its operations beside the town's greatest natural resource — the mineral-rich Cave Spring Hollow, which draws 800 gallons of water from below the Earth's surface every minute.

However, it wasn't until winning gold for his Old No. 7 Tennessee Whiskey at the World's

Fair in 1904 that Jack's name captured the world's attention. Over the following years, as the distillery rebounded from Prohibition and World War II, Jack Daniels' place in society became apparent.

In the 1950s, award-winning singer Frank Sinatra's ongoing support of Jack Daniels' led to the introduction of whiskey into pop culture. American blues artists connected with the authenticity of Tennessee whiskey, while rock and roll enthusiasts were attracted to Jack's edgy and independent associations. Even today, Jack Daniel's is

(Jack Daniels, page 18)



Jasper "Jack" Daniel purchased the Cave Spring Hollow for \$2,148 in 1881, which was a fortune during that time. The spring's water is used in every bottle of Jack Daniel's sold around the world. A life-size bronze statue of Jack, appropriately nicknamed 'Jack On The Rocks,' was unveiled in front of the spring on what would have been his 150th birthday.

Jack Daniels

(continued from page 17)

a common theme in country music lyrics.

"There was a sudden boom in interest in Tennessee whiskey, but our industry was suffering because there wasn't a standard," says Combs. "People began making moonshine and selling it as 'Tennessee whiskey' just because they made it in the state, which quickly brought to our attention the need for a federal law to define a standard."

To reconcile this discrepancy, the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce partnered with the Tennessee Distillers Guild in 2013 to advocate on behalf of Jack Daniel's and other distilleries in the state. In response, the state legislature moved quickly to draft and approve House Bill 1084, which created the first law defining Tennessee whiskey. This bill was not only instrumental in protecting Jack Daniel's equity, but also in fos-

tering growth for new distilleries in the state.

So, what differentiates Tennessee whiskey from bourbon? It's the unique process by which it is filtered before going into the barrel — called charcoal mellowing. Drop by drop, the clear, unaged whiskey trickles through 10-feet of sugar maple charcoal, giving it the distinctive smoothness expected by Jack Daniel's drinkers.

The whiskey is then transferred into barrels that have been meticulously handcrafted from American White Oak, where it is left to mature until it's deemed ready for bottling. Although this process has been used by Jack Daniel's for over 150 years, in 2018, the barrels came under scrutiny by local property tax assessors for the first time since Prohibition.

"Our whiskey barrels are an important part of where the flavor develops," says Combs. "Being taxed on those barrels would have been detrimental to distillers in the state. We're direct competitors of Kentucky, in which bourbon is a signature industry, and the whis-



The Jack Daniel's mash is pumped into copper stills that are steamed from the bottom before going through the charcoal mellowing process. The copper plays a large role in the distilling process as it contributes to the whiskey's smooth taste by evenly dispersing the heat.

key barrel tax would have impacted Tennessee's competitiveness."

The Chamber was instrumental in supporting efforts to clar-

ify the taxation issue. Under the Tennessee state constitution, it was determined that whiskey barrels were to remain exempt



Jack Daniel's is the oldest registered distillery in the United States and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The distillery operates 92 barrelhouses, storing over 2 million barrels at one time, where the whiskey is aged a minimum of four years and sometimes up to seven until deemed ready for bottling.

from taxation as “manufactured articles,” which are later sold to hot sauce makers, beer brewers, and Scotch whiskey distillers.

Combs emphasizes the importance of having a unified voice to resolve such barriers that could impede business.

“From an operational standpoint, Tennessee is a great state to do business in,” says Combs. “The Chamber’s focus on tax law changes and other business incentives has helped to promote not only Jack Daniel’s but many other industries as well. I don’t think we’d be where we are today without those policies in place.”

The support of the Moore County community and certainly the devoted workers have figured prominently in Jack Daniel’s success, he stresses.

“We are one of the most efficient distilleries and bottling facilities in the world,” says Combs. “We employ about 1,000 people in Moore County and surrounding areas, and I truly believe we have

the most passionate and dedicated workforce there is.”

Because of the level of support that the distillery has received from members of the community, Jack Daniel’s prioritizes reinvestment in the local and state economy. To date, they contribute significant funds to over 150 organizations, including their local government and school systems, and have recently launched the Nearest and Jack Advancement Initiative to promote diversity within the American whiskey industry.

“Jack Daniel believed in the principles of living life to the fullest, enjoying the moments we have, and giving it our all,” says Combs. “That’s what we do here at the distillery every day, and that’s what we want to help our community do as well.”

To learn more about Jack Daniels’ rich history in Tennessee and the impact they are making today, visit their website at jackdaniels.com.



Jack Daniel’s gives back to many causes both locally and nationally, including the Tunnel to Towers 5K Run and Walk, which is held annually in Lynchburg to honor those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, and to support those in service today. This year, Jack Daniel’s exceeded their financial goal for donations to the event.

THERE ARE **ROAD TRIPS**

AND THEN THERE ARE

PILGRIMAGES

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The Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry has worked closely with businesses throughout the state to influence the decision-making process at the Tennessee Capitol.

1912

Founded in Chattanooga by business leaders to protect and enhance Tennessee's business and manufacturing climate through advocacy in Nashville at the State Capitol.

Initiated successful legislative efforts for Tennessee to become the sixth Right to Work state in the nation.

1947

1983

Successfully pushed for major tax exemptions (raw materials, machinery, water and energy) saving Tennessee manufacturers and business \$7.3 billion since adoption in 1983.

Worked to defeat union legislation mandating the payment of dues from all employees.

1985

Better Together

The Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry's work since 1912 has impacted policy and has focused on making Tennessee a top state for business

By Claire Hill

With a history spanning more than 100 years, the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry has helped empower and represent the business community in the Tennessee legislature, making the state a leading choice for workforce and economic development.

The organization was formed in 1912 by industry leaders to protect and enhance Tennessee's businesses and manufacturing climate through advocacy in Nashville at the capitol – a mission that is still relevant today.

"We have one of the best economic and professional environments in the United States due to the work of the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry," says Rhedona Rose, chief administrative officer of the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation and a member of the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry's board. "The chamber played a key role in helping create the tax climate that is beneficial to Tennessee business owners, while also promoting economic development and encouraging companies to expand their operations here."

Along with being a voice for businesses in the legislative space, the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry also provides research, conferences, and operational information – keeping leaders up to date in the regulatory environment.

"The Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation participates in multiple Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry educational workshops that are provided throughout the year," says Rose. "It's amazing to see the community come together to learn via environmental

workshops, worker's compensation workshops, or new tax law workshops that are provided by the chamber."

Rose says that the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry is a crucial advocate as it works with government and proprietors to monitor trends and promote opportunities for communities throughout the state.

"Developing relationships through attending fundraisers, as well as helping business leaders with issues off session

(Better Together, page 22)

2014

Addressed workforce concerns through support of the Tennessee Promise and other workforce initiatives.

Worked to enact the single sales factor for manufacturers saving \$140 million annually and permanently embedding Tennessee as a top manufacturing state.

2017



Better Together

(continued from page 21)

that individual constituents are dealing with, is essential to the chamber's mission," says Rose.

The Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry works closely with local chambers of commerce and economic devel-

opment teams to research critical issues affecting their businesses through surveys, policy events, and member input.

"We partner with the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry on various projects throughout the year," says Wil Evans, president of Maury Alliance, which is the Maury County Chamber and Economic Alliance. "Surveys are sent collecting research from our

local members to better assist our partners at the state level as they advocate for small and large businesses alike."

Issues such as worker's compensation have been addressed by the organization as early as 1919 and are still prevalent in legislative concerns today. The Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry worked with manufacturers to help push for major tax exemptions in 1983

and helped address workforce concerns helping to bring readily accessible education to Tennessee's workers in 2014.

"As a business leader, I see the value of the chamber in helping to create opportunities for companies to succeed," says Rose. "I am proud of the rich history of the chamber and am excited to see how we can all work together to better the lives of Tennesseans."



The Tennessee Chamber works with policymakers to address issues important to workers all across the state.



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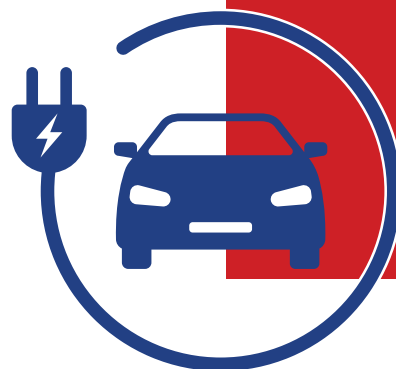
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Leading the Charge

Tennessee is ranked no. 1 in the southeast for electric vehicle manufacturing and employment

By Claire Hill

Tennessee is at the forefront of the transformation from the combustion vehicle to the electric vehicle as the state is home to five major assembly plants and more than 900 automotive suppliers located in 88 of the state's 95 counties.

With more than 200,000 electric vehicles projected to be on Tennessee roads by 2028, Tennessee's five car manufacturers, including General Motors (GM), Ford, Toyota, Nissan, and Volkswagen, are boosting Tennessee's economy and have invested billions of dollars in the transition, supporting automobile manufacturing, one of Tennessee's strongest sectors.

"Being on the forefront of electric vehicle manufacturing didn't happen overnight," says John Bradley, senior vice president of economic development at Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). "We worked for years alongside our partners at the Tennessee Department of Eco-

nomic and Community Development (TNECD) and the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry to have the success we have today. Developing relation-

ships is key, and it takes time to make a significant impact in the communities we serve."

Bradley says that TVA has one of the most diverse energy

portfolios in the nation, and manufacturers want renewable energy and reliable power –

(Leading the Charge, page 26)



In September, Nissan approved the first ever bi-directional charger for use with the Nissan LEAF in the U.S.

Leading the Charge

(continued from page 25)

which TVA has, making the region TVA serves a prime location for manufacturing.

Production of electric vehicles requires a significant subset of other suppliers in addition to the Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs). The booming activity happening in the state is amplified, especially since each OEM has its own electric vehicle strategy, and the goal for TNECD is to continue attracting automobile suppliers to Tennessee.

"Economic development is a team sport, which involves many players on the federal, state, and local levels," says Stuart McWhorter, Tennessee's

Department of Economic and Community Development commissioner. "We rely on our partners to support TNECD's recruitment efforts and demonstrate how we are collectively working toward a common goal to ultimately help these companies excel in Tennessee."

McWhorter also says he supports the partnership of the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry as we continue to collaborate to promote economic development and job creation in the state.

The history of the automotive manufacturing industry in Tennessee began in the early 80s, and its success in the state is due to the industry's ability to adjust and adapt to trends.

"Tennessee is dedicated to supporting the growth of electric vehicle manufactur-



General Motors announced a \$2 billion investment in its plant in Spring Hill 2020 for electric vehicle production. The facility produced its first electric vehicles at the plant earlier in 2022.

ing," says McWhorter. "Since 2017, roughly \$12 billion has been invested in Tennessee from electric vehicle related projects, and more than 900 suppliers are conscious about the future shifts in the industry

and are adjusting accordingly."

In 2020, GM announced a \$2 billion investment in its Spring Hill Manufacturing facility for electric vehicle production. The facility began electric vehicle production earlier this year



Toyota believes in a portfolio approach that puts the power in the hands of the customer to choose the powertrain technology that works best for their life, whether that's battery electric, fuel cell, plug-in hybrid, or hybrid vehicles.



Volkswagen marked the start of production of its all-electric ID.4 compact SUV in Chattanooga in July of this year, which was the first Volkswagen electric vehicle assembled in the U.S.

with the Cadillac LYRIQ, nine months ahead of schedule.

Additionally, GM and LG Energy Solution, through its Ultium Cells LLC joint venture, are currently building an electric battery cell manufacturing facility in Spring Hill, bringing 1,300 new jobs with mass battery production expected in 2023. The dual gas-powered and electric vehicle manufacturing production in Spring Hill represents both sides of GM's growth strategy and the breadth of expertise within its Tennessee workforce.

"Local chambers of commerce, utility companies, and local governments spend a lot of time and effort working to promote their communities to manufacturers and automobile suppliers," says Bradley. "Our automobile strategy has been one of our most successful economic development programs in the last decade."

Looking toward the future, Toyota believes in a portfolio approach that puts the power in the hands of the customer to choose the powertrain technology that works best for their life, whether that's battery electric, fuel cell, plug-in hybrid, or hybrid vehicles. The Jackson Toyota plant builds and houses the transaxles for all

the North American products that Toyota produces.

The plant announced in February that \$17 million will be invested in the plant for the advancement of electrification in the automobile industry.

"We were proud to have landed our fourth OEM – Ford – in West Tennessee in the last year," says McWhorter. "Our state's central location and advanced infrastructure are key advantages to businesses, not just in the automotive industry, but across many industries operating in Tennessee."

The site, which is in Stanton, Tennessee, is part of a broader regional electric vehicle manufacturing investment by Ford that includes a \$5.8 billion battery factory in Kentucky. It's the blueprint for Ford's future manufacturing facilities and will enable Ford to help lead America's shift to electric vehicles.

With more than 19,000 Tennesseans employed to date with electric vehicle operations, the industry is expected to continue making an impact on Tennessee's economy while impacting the industry's electric revolution.

(Leading the Charge, page 28)



With more than 19,000 Tennesseans employed to date with electric vehicle operations, the industry is expected to continue making an impact on Tennessee's economy while impacting the industry's electric revolution.

Leading the Charge

(continued from page 27)

Volkswagen marked the start of production of its all-electric ID.4 compact SUV in Chattanooga in July of this year, which was the first Volkswagen electric vehicle assembled in the U.S.

The start of production is the result of Volkswagen's \$800 million investment into the electrification of its Chattanooga factory, including dedicated facilities for vehicle and battery pack assembly. The factory in Tennessee is now the sixth global site to produce vehicles for Volkswagen's electric line-up.

As a pioneer in the electric vehicle space, Nissan has continuously looked for ways to deliver

new, meaningful technologies to electric vehicle owners. In September, Nissan approved the first ever bi-directional charger for use with the Nissan LEAF in the U.S.

In July of 2008, Nissan announced that it was entering into a partnership with the TNECD and TVA to foster the development of electric vehicle-friendly policies and an electric vehicle charging infrastructure. This collaboration was the first of its kind in the U.S and has served as a model for other markets across the nation.

"Tennessee is a great place to do business," says Bradley.



The Cadillac LRIQ will be produced at the Spring Hill plant.

"Key players across the state from the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry to

TVA, to the TNECD, all have a role to play and want to see sustainable growth."



The first Cadillac LRIQ rolled off the assembly line in Spring Hill earlier in 2022, nine months ahead of schedule.



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National Association of Manufacturers President and CEO Jay Timmons greets students attending the mobile Creators Wanted campaign staged in partnership with Tennessee Chamber of Commerce. The event was held at White House Heritage High School in Robertson County on Tuesday, Sept. 27, through Thursday, Sept. 29, 2022, and attracted more than 700 students who learned about career opportunities in manufacturing. Behind Timmons, from left, are Dr. Chris Causey, director of schools for Robertson County; Carolyn Lee, president and executive director, The Manufacturing Institute; Bradley Jackson, president and chief executive officer, Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry/Tennessee Manufacturers Association; Tony Fraley, Electrolux Springfield plant manager; and Ken Engel, senior vice president, global supply chain – North America at Schneider Electric. *Photo courtesy of National Association of Manufacturers/David Bohrer.*

A Common Purpose

Tennessee Chamber collaborates with government, industry to develop workforce and education initiatives to position Tennessee as among the most attractive states for business

By Glen Liford

A strong economy. Low taxes. Education and career development efforts. Commitments by government and industry to work together. Southern charm. Scenic beauty. And a quality of life that makes the state attractive to droves of newcomers.

These are all factors drawing new residents to Tennessee and making the state one of the hottest locations for attracting new business opportunities.

None of this has happened by accident. Well, no one can take credit for the state's scenic beauty and our residents' Southern charm, but the rest of these elements have resulted from the concerted efforts of government, industry, and organizations like the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry to establish an environment attractive to high-quality employers and create a workforce that is aligned to the talent needs of those companies.

"Workforce is one of the most significant challenges that employers face, whether they are new businesses relocating to Tennessee or established employers looking to maintain their staff," says Bradley Jackson, president, and chief executive officer of the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry. "The Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry has worked tirelessly to help identify policy issues that enhance the state's business climate and address challenges

for businesses as they search for employees with the right skills."

The Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry has had a willing partner in government officials who have taken innovative steps to craft initiatives designed to create a skilled workforce ready to tackle 21st Century jobs.

"Tennessee is the best state in the nation to do business," says Governor Bill Lee. "As companies and families move into our state in record num-

bers, it's important we have a skilled workforce to keep up with the pace. We've made strong investments in career and technical education to ensure that every Tennessean has the opportunity, and our economy continues to thrive."

Lee has demonstrated his commitment to this common purpose by continuing education reform and supporting key workforce partnerships to further enhance the state's position for business.

Investments include:

- \$1 billion to strengthen public education through the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA). This effort modernized a 30-year-old funding approach to fund students, not systems, increase accountability in education spending, and guarantee that teacher pay raises make it to their paychecks

- \$500 million to enhance middle and high school Career and Technical Education (CTE) opportunities

- \$200 million for Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs) infrastructure improvements to help double the skilled workforce by 2026

- \$25 million for the Governor's Investment in Vocation Education (GIVE) initiative, a two-pronged approach to expand access to vocational and technical training for Tennessee high school students. The GIVE initiative awards community grants that will fund regional partnerships between high schools, industry, and Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs) to build new work-based learning/apprenticeship programs and market-driven dual-credit opportunities, and expand industry-informed career



Electrolux Predictive Maintenance Technicians Tim Dowell, left, and Tracy Groce share some of the equipment they work with in their roles at the company's plant in Springfield, Tennessee. Photo courtesy of National Association of Manufacturers/ David Bohrer.

and technical education offerings

- \$79 million to clear the waitlist of more than 11,000 students waiting to join the workforce as skilled workers

Governor Lee's efforts build on the foundation of state initia-

tives like The Drive to 55, Tennessee Promise, and Tennessee Reconnect.

The Drive to 55, implemented by former Governor Bill Haslam in 2013, aims to bring the num-

(A Common Purpose, page 32)



Eastman has positioned itself as an exemplary model of a business doing its part to address local workforce needs as they bolster and support community based workforce development programs.

A Common Purpose

(continued from page 31)

ber of Tennesseans who hold college degrees or technical certifications to 55% by 2025.

The Tennessee Promise program provides tuition-free attendance at one of the state's 13 community colleges or 27 colleges of applied technology.

Tennessee Reconnect is an initiative to help more adults return to higher education to gain new skills, advance in the workplace,

and fulfill lifelong dreams of completing a degree or credential.

These education reforms and programs are bolstered by activities staged by the private sector and supported by the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce.

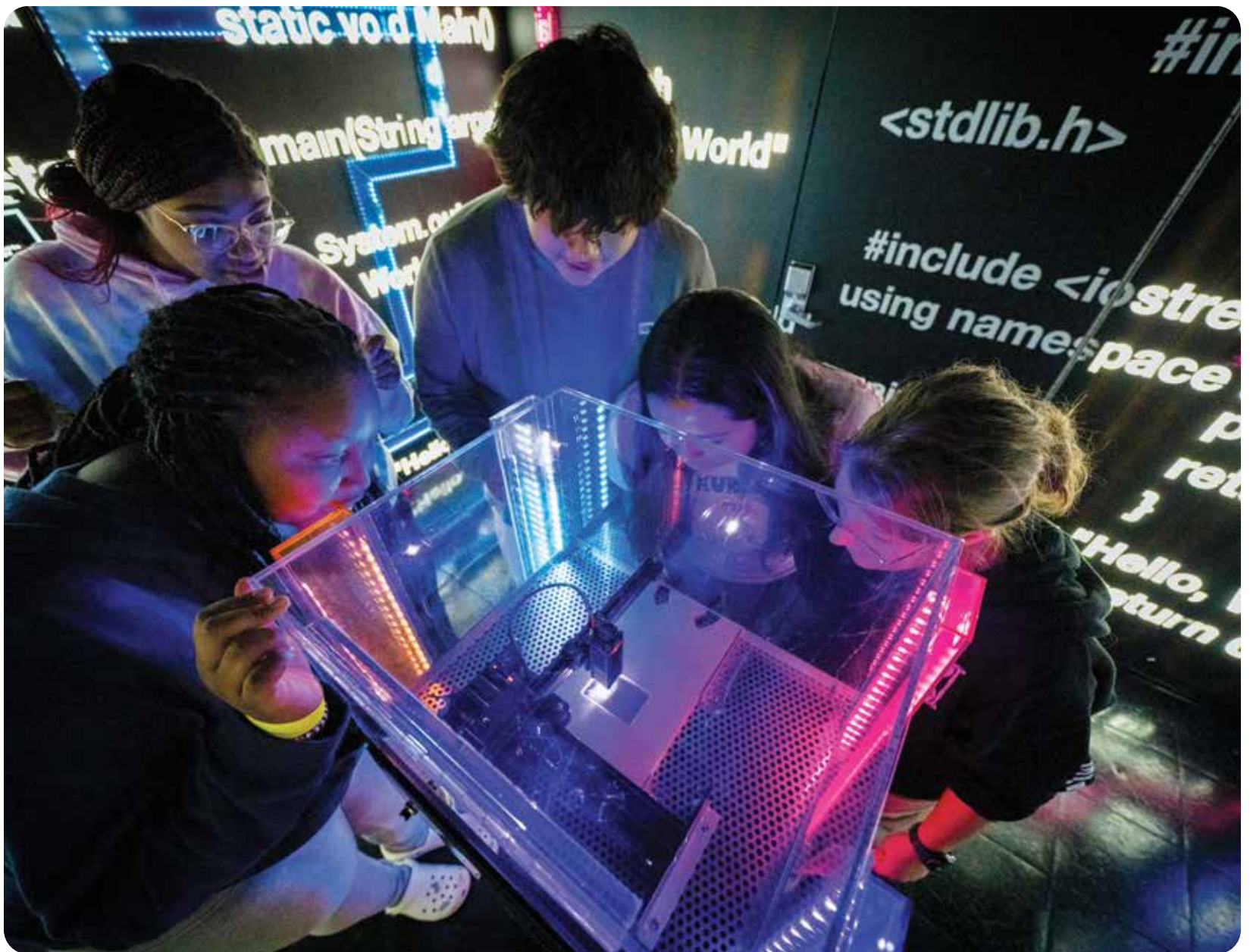
According to a report by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in October 2022, there are 10.1 million open jobs in the United States and only 6 million unemployed workers. This trend is not expected to end any time soon. And many business leaders see the lack of skilled employees as one of the greatest obstacles they face.

Manufacturing is one of those sectors most threatened by this shortage. Manufacturers in the United States need to fill 4 million jobs by 2030, according to a workforce study by the Manufacturing Institute and Deloitte. More than half of those jobs could be left unfilled because of two issues: a skills gap and misperceptions about modern manufacturing.

Through a joint effort between the National Association of Manufacturers and the Manufacturing Institute, the 501(c)(3) workforce development and education partner of the NAM,

the organizations brought their Creators Wanted 18-wheel truck to the rolling hills of Robertson County and the grounds of White House Heritage High School for three days of fun and learning for local students in late September.

Sponsored by Electrolux of Springfield and the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry, sponsors hope the Creators Wanted campaign will recruit 600,000 new workers; increase the number of students enrolling in technical and vocational schools or reskilling programs by 25%; and increase



The National Association of Manufacturers' Creators Wanted campaign seeks to get students excited about the opportunities available in manufacturing and hopefully will inspire some to consider a career in the industry. Here they are looking at an industrial scanner that is reading a code for the "escape room" game students played during the event. Photo courtesy of National Association of Manufacturers/David Bohrer.

the positive perception of the industry among parents to 50% from 27%.

"We're excited to see the response from the students," says Dan Caldwell, senior manager for manufacturing learning at Electrolux in Springfield. "They will get to explore these manufacturing careers and participate in some STEM activities as part of the career exploration process. We hope it will get them interested in technical education and just let them know some of the options that are out there."

A similar workshop was held earlier in East Tennessee by the First Tennessee Development District, an association of local governments committed to improving the quality of life in Northeast Tennessee. The association brings together students, teachers, and employers for its CareerQuest Tennessee events. The day-long events let students explore career options and learn from local industry representatives about what skills are needed. They learn about careers in advanced manufacturing, construction, healthcare, and information technology.

"Many of the kids only know about what their mom and dad do," explains Lottie Ryans, the association's director of workforce & literacy initiatives. "We show them what types of jobs are available in our region, and they get to learn about what the careers are like."

Similarly, the latest Tennessee Chamber effort to boost Tennessee's workforce will debut in 2023. Partnering with Tennessee Associated Builders and Contractors, Tennessee Trucking Association, Tennessee Forestry Association, McKee Foods, and the Tennessee Road builders Association, the Chamber is launching its Be Pro Be Proud initiative, a mobile career awareness platform that will travel to high schools across the state to allow students to explore professional skilled career options through virtual reality that



Ron Broadwater, right, Northeast State Community College Regional Center for Advanced Manufacturing technical coordinator, helps students like this one at a Career Quest event in 2022 explore challenging and interesting careers in manufacturing. These events help inspire interest and work toward building a pipeline of industrial skilled labor for the region. Photo courtesy of Northeast State Community College.

simulates welding, the operation of heavy equipment, truck driving, and CNC machining. The learning stations will be installed in a semi-trailer truck for ease of transportation.

"This will allow students to see these career opportunities firsthand and get a taste of what these jobs are like," says Jackson. "We're excited to launch this effort and to know that it will result in more people gaining these skill sets and going into these careers. This program will help employers fill much needed positions while providing future employees with a valuable career opportunity."

The common goal of these wide-ranging programs is to create a work force attractive to new and existing employers and to ensure jobs are available to improve and maintain the quality of life in Tennessee communities.

While it takes time for these changes to have an effect, there is evidence they are helping to build Tennessee's reputation as a great state for business. The Tennessee Department of Community and Economic Development shared the following recent national magazine endorsements:

- July 2022 — Business Facilities ranked Tennessee the No. 1 Recovery Leader, up from No. 5 in 2021. This ranking is based on GDP growth over the previous 12 months

- June 2022 — Tennessee was named the recipient of Area Development's first-ever Platinum Shovel Award, which recognized the state's significant job creation and investment in 2021

- May 2022 — Ford Motor Company's Blue Oval City project in West Tennessee ranks No.

1 on Site Selection's Top North American Deals of 2021 list

- April 2022 — Chief Executive ranked Tennessee the No. 3 Best State for Business

- January 2022 — Tennessee was selected for the Business Facilities 2021 Deal of the Year Gold Award for the Ford Blue Oval City project at the Megasite of West Tennessee. Additionally, Tennessee was selected for the Business Facilities 2021 Impact Award in Advanced Manufacturing for the Smith & Wesson project in East Tennessee

There's no denying there will be an increased need for a skilled and well-educated work force for the foreseeable future and the programs and initiatives above will continue to play a vital role in meeting this demand to enhance Tennessee's standing as a business and economic leader.



TENNESSEE CHAMBER of Commerce & Industry

TENNESSEE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

Local chambers grow and enhance the business climate, build community, and advocate on behalf of their business and industry. Tennessee is fortunate to have many successful chambers.

"The Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry would not be what it is today without the outstanding work of local chambers of commerce," says Bradley Jackson, chief executive officer and president of the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry. "We attribute much of our success to their work and dedication to their communities."

We are honored to spotlight a chamber from each region whose work, commitment, and advocacy has made a tremendous impact on their community - Blount County, Lawrence county, and Collierville. Here's an overview of how they attribute their success.



Blount Partnership (East Tennessee)

The foothills of the Smokies are alive with anticipation. East Tennessee has long been known for its economic development success. Much of this success is rooted in Blount County - from the addition of DENSO in the mid-1980s, to the landing of firearms manufacturer Smith & Wesson which is placing its headquarters and operations center in

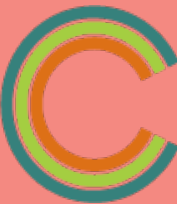
Maryville. This crowned five years' worth of recruiting and other company expansions in the area that generated over 3,000 new jobs and \$1.7 billion in capital investment. Now the focus turns to develop an even more family-friendly community filled with amenities like a well-traversed greenway expansion.



Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce (Middle Tennessee)

It might be tempting to use the terms "rural" and "distressed" synonymously to describe rural communities, but that certainly isn't an accurate description of Lawrence County. Our rural county, located on the Tennessee-Alabama state line, boasts a growing population with an increasing retail base, improved access to gig-speed internet, and job growth happening at a rate four times faster than the national average. While many of our existing manufacturers have grown quietly, more than a dozen new manufacturing companies have located here since 2016 — creating more than 1,000 high-quality jobs. This growth did not happen by chance; it's a result of good leadership. Our local city and county governments, the Lawrence County School System, Lawrenceburg Utility Systems (LUS), and the

Lawrence County Chamber work daily to ensure our community is focused on building an economy for the next generation. We award nearly 1,000 industry certifications to our high school students annually. We are proud to say that two in every three of our students graduate with a skilled trade from one of our award-winning career and technical education programs. LUS is equipped with extraordinary capacities of electricity, water, sewer, and natural gas to serve new businesses and new neighbors alike. The Lawrence County Chamber represents nearly 550 businesses and works to market our community to tourists, prepare new industrial sites for investment, and to ensure that the term "distressed" is never again used to describe our rural county.



Collierville Chamber of Commerce (West Tennessee)

The Collierville Chamber of Commerce provides a broad scope of opportunities, services, and resources specifically focused on helping local businesses grow and prosper. We believe that membership with our Chamber is not so much about joining another organization, but about tapping into a resource. By year end, the Collierville Chamber will have produced over 50 programs and special events focused on helping small businesses gain exposure and access to needed resources. A focus of ours is supporting and investing in

workforce development. We work with the local municipal school system to invest in programs and technology. This prepares our students for employment, advances them in their careers, and helps to build a skilled workforce. These efforts have made a tremendous impact on the economic stability of our region. The Collierville Chamber's annual signature event "Excellence in Business Awards" recognizes excellence in innovation, entrepreneurship, and citizenship within the local business community.



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Paving the way for EVs

TVA is committed to bringing the transformative power of EVs to the Tennessee Valley. That's why we're leading efforts to make the switch to EVs easier through:

- Setting innovative and supportive policies
- Increasing consumer awareness
- Partnering to improve EV availability
- Joining forces with stakeholders to grow the Fast Charge Network, a collection of public fast charger sites located at least every 50 miles along interstates and major highways in TVA's seven-state region

Ready to find out more? Visit [TVA.com/EV](https://www.tva.com/ev)