



# INDUSTRY LEADER

AUGUST 2024

Middle Tennessee Industrial Development Association

# 62<sup>nd</sup>

## Annual Board of Directors Meeting and Economic Development Seminar



From left: Brad Gibson, Stephen Surles, Victor Pusser, Al Kerstiens, Jennifer Brogdon, and Bob Bibb (Not pictured: Mike Davidson and Carl Haney)

MTIDA held its 62nd annual board meeting and the 2024 Economic Development Seminar in Franklin on July 31 and August 1st. The event brought together approximately 160 community members, TVA representatives, and State of Tennessee partners to discuss key trends in energy supply for economic development.

### *Executive Committee for 2024-2025:*

**President: Victor Pusser**  
Lawrenceburg Utility System

**Vice President: Jennifer Brogdon**  
Upper Cumberland Electric Membership Corp.

**Secretary-Treasurer: Al Kerstiens**  
Mt. Pleasant Power System

**Brad Gibson**  
Middle Tennessee Electric

**Mike Davidson**  
Middle Tennessee Natural Gas Utility District

**Carl Haney**  
Cookeville Energy

**Stephen Surles**  
Tennessee Valley Authority

# THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS

*We are pleased to announce that four additional natural gas systems have joined the Association.*

## **NEW MEMBERS**

- **Clarksville Gas & Water Department**
- **Cookeville Energy Department**
- **Livingston Gas Department**
- **Springfield Gas Department**

## **GAS MEMBERS**

City of Pulaski  
City of Waynesboro  
Fayetteville Public Utilities  
Lawrenceburg Utility System  
Middle TN Natural Gas Utility District  
Town of Smyrna  
Atmos Energy Corporation

## **LOCAL POWER COMPANY MEMBERS**

Caney Fork Electrical Cooperative  
CDE Lightband  
Columbia Power & Water Systems  
Cookeville Energy Department  
Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation  
Dickson Electric System  
Duck River Electric Membership Corporation  
Fayetteville Public Utilities  
Gallatin Department of Electricity  
Lawrenceburg Power Systems  
Lewisburg Electric System  
McMinnville Electric System  
Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative  
Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation  
Mt. Pleasant Power System  
Nashville Electric Service  
Pulaski Electric System  
Shelbyville Power System  
Smithville Electric System  
Sparta Electric System  
Springfield Department of Electricity  
Tennessee Valley Authority  
Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation  
Tullahoma Utilities Authority  
Upper Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation  
Volunteer Energy Cooperative  
Winchester Utilities

*In addition to these members, we welcome seven new affiliate members.*

## **NEW AFFILIATE MEMBERS**

- **Ecosystem Planning & Restoration**
- **H&M Construction Co., Inc.**
- **Hussey Gay Bell**
- **Irby**
- **RAWSO**
- **Thomas & Hutton**
- **Terracon**

## **AFFILIATE MEMBERS**

Agracel  
Allen & Hoshall  
Barge Design Solutions  
Bradley Arant Boult Cummings  
Carroll Daniel Construction  
Christman Company  
Crain Construction  
DPR Construction  
Fisher & Arnold  
Forcum Lannom Contractors  
IC Thomasson Associates  
Messer Construction  
S&ME  
Sain Associates  
T.W. Frierson Contractor  
TTL USA  
Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association  
Tennessee Gas Association  
Tennessee Municipal Electric Power Association  
Tennessee Valley Public Power Association  
Veloture Development Group



*The work MTIDA does in Middle Tennessee is on behalf of and due to the support of our members.*

# 2024 Economic Development Seminar



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The keynote speakers for the Economic Development Seminar on August 1st were **Bryan Williams**, Senior Vice President for Generation at TVA, and **Jessica Dufner**, Director for Business Communications at TVA. Their presentation detailed the crucial efforts underway to ensure a diverse energy portfolio capable of meeting the future energy demands in the Valley.

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Mark Kimball, General Manager at Gallatin Department of Electricity, asks Williams and Dufner a question during the Q&A session.

# 2024 Economic Development Seminar



Following the presentation by Williams and Dufner, a panel of experts discussed energy supply trends at both the local level and in terms of what prospective companies are requiring. **Vic Pusser** of Lawrenceburg Utility Systems and **Matt Stennett** of Middle TN Natural Gas Utility District shared from their experiences. **Tyler Chaffee** and **Will West**, both Target Market Specialists for TVA, provided insights into broader industry trends they observe when recruiting companies to the Tennessee Valley.

The seminar concluded with an update from Bob Bibb, Executive Director, and Kendrick Curtis, Assistant Director, on the services and support that MTIDA provides. The session included a workshop led by Matt Von Lunen, Director of Operations, which focused on the wage and benefit survey and community data sheet projects.



## Creation of Synergy Magnetics in Jackson County

**GAINESBORO (June)** Synergy Magnetics LLC officials announced that the company will start its journey in Gainesboro and become the first economic development project to land in Jackson County since 2018.

Synergy Magnetics manufactures transformers, and through the project, the company will invest more than \$5.5 million and create 35 new jobs at its Gainesboro facility.

Source: TNECD



## LazeStar, Inc. to Relocate Manufacturing Operations to Williamson County

**FAIRVIEW (June)** LazeStar, Inc. will invest \$5.5 million to relocate its operations from Livermore, California, to Fairview, Tennessee.

LazeStar will create 25 new jobs in Williamson County. Its recent expansion and relocation are a result of the company's continued growth and will position LazeStar to better serve its customers with hermetic laser sealing and package fabrication.

Founded more than 20 years ago, LazeStar specializes in fabrication and laser welding components used in the defense, aerospace, microwave, biomedical and commercial industries.

Source: TNECD



## OPmobility Exteriors Group Expands in Maury County



**SPRING HILL (June)** OPmobility (formerly Plastic Omnium) officials announced that the company will undergo a \$3 million expansion at its Spring Hill plant.

OPmobility, headquartered in France, is a global family-led group with 152 plants across 28 countries. The company has operated in Tennessee since 2015 with locations in Chattanooga, Smyrna, Spring Hill and Hendersonville.

The project is a new opportunity for OPmobility to expand its product offerings for customers and further support electric vehicle production lines. The expansion will create 186 new jobs, up from just 18 currently in Maury County and 568 across the state.

Source: TNECD

# 15 New Site Development Grant Recipients

More than \$17 million in grants

Program helps communities prepare industrial sites for business investment

TNECD has awarded 180 Site Development Grants across Tennessee

**TNECD (June)** Economic and Community Development Commissioner Stuart McWhorter announced 15 new Site Development Grant recipients. The grants, totaling more than \$17 million, are designed to help communities invest in infrastructure and engineering improvements to land economic development projects and achieve Select Tennessee site certification.

“What happens in rural Tennessee matters to all Tennesseans, and we’ve made significant investments to strengthen the skilled workforce in our rural counties,” said Lee. “TNECD’s Site Development grant program further supports those efforts by creating high-quality jobs for thousands of Tennesseans across our state and spurring future economic growth.”

The Site Development Grant program is part of the Rural Economic Opportunity Act, which provides funding to improve the economies of Tennessee’s rural communities. Since 2016, TNECD has awarded 180 Site Development Grants across the state, totaling nearly \$100 million in assistance to local communities and generating 7,011 new jobs for Tennesseans.

“From Memphis to Mountain City, Tennessee has so many rural communities,” said McWhorter. “Economic growth in our rural regions is vital to our

future, and I’m grateful to all involved for helping make this round of grants happen.”

**The grants awarded this round include:**

## **INTERCHANGE BUSINESS PARK**

**\$4,523,950**

**Speculative Building Construction**

City of Crossville

## **COLUMBIA TENNESSEE RAIL SITE**

**\$1,687,239**

**Electrical Infrastructure**

Industrial Development Board of the City of Columbia, Tennessee

## **LINDEN SITE**

**\$1,000,000**

**Due Diligence**

Industrial Development Board of McMinnville-Warren County

## **DAN SPEER INDUSTRIAL PARK SOUTH**

**\$1,000,000**

**Property Grading**

Industrial Development Board of Pulaski and Giles County Tennessee

## **LAWRENCEBURG INDUSTRIAL PARK**

**\$4,500,000**

**Infrastructure and property purchase**

Lawrence County Joint Economic and Community Development Board

## **MACON-LAFAYETTE INDUSTRIAL PARK**

**\$936,149**

**Electrical Infrastructure**

Macon County Government

Applications were reviewed by an advisory committee made up of TNECD, Austin Consulting, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

Source: TNECD



Dan Speer Industrial Park South

# MTSU Business Research Center Recognized Nationally for Wage, Benefits Study

**NORFOLK, VA (July)** The Business and Economic Research Center at Middle Tennessee State University was recently awarded the Community, Economic, and Workforce Research Award for its 2023 Wage and Benefit Survey at the annual Council for Community and Economic Research, or C2ER, Conference in Norfolk, Virginia.

Held this year in mid-June, the C2ER Conference presents awards in six categories, with MTSU's BERC receiving an award in the category for projects supporting collaborative and community research initiatives that have brought together different groups or organizations to achieve a common goal. BERC was awarded for the project's response to a demonstrated need, quality and collaborative approach.

In cooperation with the **Middle Tennessee Industrial Development Association**, BERC's study surveyed human resource professionals to provide region-specific reports on the human resource practices and compensation structures of manufacturing and industrial companies across Middle Tennessee. To view regional infographics with survey findings, visit <https://w1.mtsu.edu/berc/wb2023.php>.

*"The Business and Economic Research Center has always emphasized community collaboration and partnership,"* said BERC Director Murat Arik, Ph.D., in reflecting on the center's achievement. *"Being recognized by our peer institutions in this way*

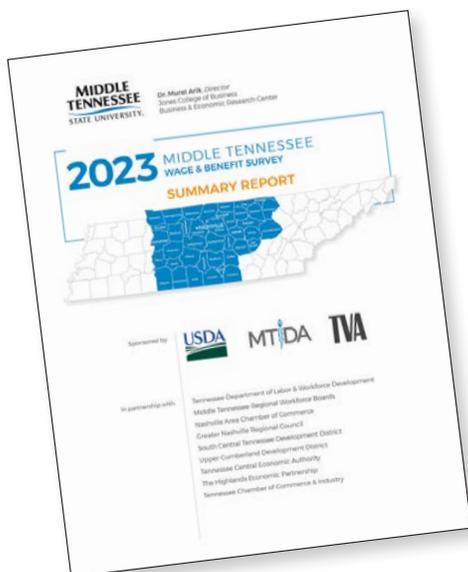
*demonstrates the commitment and dedication of our staff and partners to that mission."*

Joyce Heames, Ph.D., dean of the Jones College of Business where BERC is housed, acknowledged the value of partnering with community organizations, saying, *"We are proud of our Jones College of Business faculty and staff working with partners in Middle Tennessee to make a difference in people's lives."*

Source: MTSU News



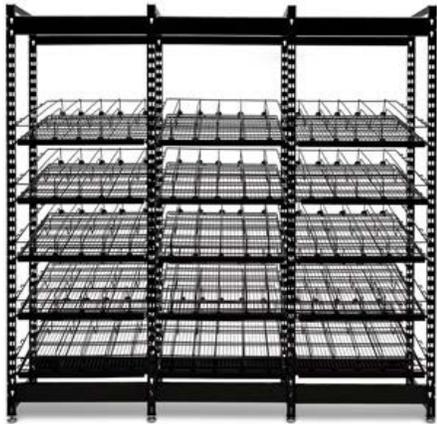
Dr. Murat Arik and Andrea Lawrence of the MTSU Business and Economic Research Center



The Wage and Benefit Survey project for Middle Tennessee, originally scheduled for the first quarter of 2025, will be postponed until the first quarter of 2026 to encourage greater participation.

In the meantime, we are pleased to offer the results of the 2023 survey to non-participants, allowing them to see the value of participating in future surveys. To request a copy of the 2023 survey results, please email [mtida@mtida.org](mailto:mtida@mtida.org), including your name, company, and whether you were aware of the 2023 survey.

The 2026 survey project will kick off in the spring of 2025 with a workshop in Murfreesboro, where human resource professionals will provide input on necessary updates and improvements. If you're interested in participating or learning more, please contact Andrea Lawrence with MTSU at [Andrea.Lawrence@mtsu.edu](mailto:Andrea.Lawrence@mtsu.edu).



# Nashville Wire Products

## to Expand Manufacturing Operations in Humphreys County

**McEWEN (August)** Nashville Wire Products officials announced that the company's plans to establish a new manufacturing site in McEwen, Tennessee.

The facility is the company's sixth base in the Volunteer State and will add 102 new jobs, increasing the company's total workforce in Tennessee by 19%. In total, Nashville Wire Products plans to invest more than \$20 million through the project.

Nashville Wire Products originally started in a garage as a tool and die shop. Since then, the company has expanded to include retail displays, shelving, wire baskets and other high-quality products. Three generations later, Nashville Wire Products remains a family-owned and -operated business with 10 U.S. locations and one in Mexico.

Source: TN ECD

### Middle Tennessee Industrial Development Association 2024-2025 Executive Committee

#### *President*

**Victor Pusser** | *General Manager*  
Lawrenceburg Utility System

#### *Vice President*

**Jennifer Brogdon** | *General Manager*  
Upper Cumberland Elec. Mem. Corp.

#### *Secretary/Treasurer*

**Al Kerstiens** | *General Manager*  
Mt. Pleasant Power System

#### *Members*

**Brad Gibson** | *Chief Operating Officer*  
Middle Tennessee Electric

**Mike Davidson** | *Executive Vice President & CEO*  
Middle TN Natural Gas Utility District

**Carl Haney** | *Director of Dept. of Energy*  
Cookeville Energy

**Stephen Surles** | *Senior Manager*  
Tennessee Valley Authority



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