

## **Lafayette ranked as a great innovation market**

**Lafayette, LA** - *Southern Business and Development Magazine* has named Lafayette one of the Top 10 Great Innovation Markets in the South for its efforts in nurturing and attracting innovation-driven industry and businesses to the region.

The magazine points out Lafayette's multicultural and multi-industrial makeup, along with innovative projects like the Fiber Initiative, Louisiana Optical Network Initiative, and LITE as key contributors to the ranking.

"Leaders in Lafayette understand technology's role in our success, both past and current. To be ranked with Raleigh/Durham, Orlando, and Austin reinforces much of our efforts aimed at fostering technology and innovation as economic drivers," says Gregg Gothreaux, LEDA President and CEO. "Lafayette has a can-do and forward-thinking attitude that makes the community open to innovative ideas and concepts usually seen in more metropolitan areas."

"This ranking is another example of why we believe Lafayette is the Crown Jewel of Louisiana," says Joey Durel, City-Parish President. "Lafayette's progressive thinking and understanding of the importance of technology is being recognized across the country. We believe there is more to come as the LUS Fiber Program, LONI, and LITE continue to evolve, coupled with the arts, culture and quality of life that we enjoy."

*Southern Business and Development* says the markets selected are "defined by vision, drive and self-determination."

"The editors hit the nail on the head. Vision, drive, and self-determination are buzzwords often associated with the people of Acadiana. Citizens and community leaders see the value in bringing technology and innovation to the community and are taking steps to make those innovations a reality. We are looking ahead to the futures of not only our children today, but that of our children's children," says Gothreaux.

Other cities in the Top 10 include Hampton Roads, VA; Savannah, GA; Oklahoma City, OK; Raleigh/Cary/Durham, NC; Orlando, FL; Austin/Round Rock, TX; Huntsville, AL; Winston-Salem, NC; and Roanoke, VA.

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