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Lafayette ranked as a top city for the Creative Class

Lafayette, LA - The creative class is on the rise in Lafayette. Citing Lafayette's "wildcatter mentality" and entrepreneurial spirit, *Southern Business and Development* has ranked Lafayette as one of the Top 10 Cities in the South for the Creative Class.

Dr. Richard Florida first presented his "Creative Class" theory to Lafayette in 2004. With the culturally diverse history of Acadiana, attracting and engaging the Creative Class in Lafayette seemed a natural fit. By creating opportunities for expression and capitalizing on our quality of life, Lafayette is attracting the knowledge workers that will shape the future of the region.

"It's one thing to say your city supports the creative class, but to be ranked with Atlanta, Austin, and Nashville validates much of our community development work aimed at fostering technology and entertainment as economic drivers," says Gregg Gothreaux, LEDA President and CEO. "In many ways, with our entrepreneurial spirit and forward thinking, Lafayette was catering to the Creative Class long before it became the 'in' thing to do."

Entrepreneurs haven't just created a progressive business community in Lafayette; their reach can be felt in the arts community and even into the government of Lafayette. The young entrepreneurs of the past are the community leaders of today and they know that in order to establish a creative class there must be government support of cultural, technological, educational, and lifestyle initiatives. They also know that quality of life is the deciding factor on where to live for the upwardly mobile.

"The most noticeable thing in the article is the company we are in," says Joey Durel, City-Parish President. "Lafayette being the smallest community recognized speaks a lot to the significance of embracing and marketing our unique culture. This ranking speaks volumes as to why we think it is important to embrace arts and culture in our community. When businesses can locate anywhere, they look at quality of life as a major factor in their decisions."

The magazine notes Lafayette's Fiber to the Premises Initiative, UL Lafayette, and the upcoming TechSouth Annual Expo as key components of Lafayette's attraction.

"City-Parish leaders see the need to bring 21st century technology to Lafayette citizens and to spark job growth and educational opportunities with that technology," says Gothreaux.

Other cities in the Top 10 include Atlanta, GA; Austin, TX; Charlotte, NC; Houston, TX; Nashville, TN; Raleigh-Durham, NC; Richmond, VA; Savannah, GA; and St. Petersburg, FL.

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