



Holmes County Central High School student Robert Boyd (pictured sitting center) signed his letter of intent to play basketball for Southwest Community College in Summit, Mississippi on Monday, April 17 in the high school library. Boyd is seen pictured above with (first row from left) Arryneshia Fort, sister, and mother Earscine Fort; (standing from left) Jason Young, HCCHS athletic director, Antwayn Patrick, HCCHS head basketball coach and William Washington, assistant coach. Patrick added that Boyd is his 10th signee in his seven years as a coach. (Photo submitted)

Lady Jaguars Powerlifters finish season as the 2017 Class III North State Champions



Beating out teams from Oxford, Hernando and Pearl, the Lady Jaguars Powerlifters have made a comeback in their second year under Holmes County Central High School Powerlifting Coach Kenneth Nelson. The girls won their first meet in January against Jim Hill going on to producing stand out lifters Lakendra Brooks, Zharia Johnson, Tynisha Roberson, Kendall Garnett, Precious Banks, Ashley Rucker, KyNoshia Montgomery, Brea Portis and Akilah Myles. The photo above was taken on Friday, March 17 at the Mississippi Coliseum after the team won in their class. Sophomore Lakendra Brooks broke all three North State records. (Courtesy photo)

THE WICKER REPORT

By: United States Senator Roger Wicker



Wicker Highlights Signs of Rising Confidence in U.S. Economy

News of Positive Investment, Job Growth Help Boost Outlook

Spring has arrived, bringing with it new life and new growth. The economy seems to be following suit, with promising signs of job creation and investor confidence. The Dow Jones has remained above 20,500 for weeks. We see promising signs in our state, where grand open-

ings and expansions offer good news. Earlier this month, for example, Winston Plywood & Veneer opened its \$100 million facility in Louisville, which is expected to employ 400 people. In late March, McCormick & Company announced it is bringing its distribution operations to Marshall County. An estimated 200 jobs could be on the way in Hattiesburg after a groundbreaking last month for the multimillion-dollar District at Midtown development.

We also see promising economic signs in other parts of the nation, most recently with the news that Toyota would invest \$1.3 billion in its Kentucky assembly plant. Toyota officials say additional investments could also be expected at the Blue Springs, Mississippi, plant in the next few years. President Trump noted the renewed confidence in U.S. manufacturing in the company's an-

nouncement. The President has routinely encouraged companies to keep jobs here at home.

Impact of Toyota, Nissan

Continues to Reverberate

Mississippians understand how these investments can make a big impact on the local workforce and economy. This year marks a decade since Toyota announced it was coming to Blue Springs. A few years earlier, in 2003, Nissan in Canton became the first automotive assembly plant in Mississippi. Since then, auto manufacturing has been responsible for thousands of new jobs in our state, not to mention significant contributions to economic growth, tax revenues, and education. On April 13, Toyota announced two major donations that will benefit students and families in our state. One will help sup-

port Mississippi BEST Robotics at Mississippi State University, which encourages science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education. The other will help support family learning programs in Northeast Mississippi, offering resources for working parents and students.

Optimism Rises After the Election

This confidence to make investments and create jobs is important to our nation's long-term economic success. According to a recent report by the National Federation of Independent Business, optimism among small businesses rose sharply after the election, and that optimism has held strong for months. Gallup's Weekly Economic Confidence Index, a survey of what Ameri-

cans think about the economy, showed similarly positive gains after Election Day.

I am convinced that President Trump's decision to roll back regulations has helped build this confidence. He has already shown he is committed to regulatory relief, issuing executive actions to review some of the most expensive, job-killing rules from the Obama Administration. Curbing unnecessary regulations is also a priority in Congress, with Republicans passing a number of Congressional Review Act resolutions to overturn onerous rules. Billions of dollars and millions of paperwork hours have been saved by eliminating regulatory burdens.

Early Surge in Job Gains

Support for policies that empower job creators and American workers promises to make a difference. January and February showed exceptionally strong growth in job gains, and the unemployment rate for March dropped to its lowest level in 10 years. Mississippi's most recent unemployment rate showed a decrease as well.

Creating a climate of regulatory relief and ushering in pro-growth policies could keep the momentum moving in the right direction. After years of weak economic growth, some spring-like change has been urgently needed. I am hopeful that it extends far beyond this season.

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