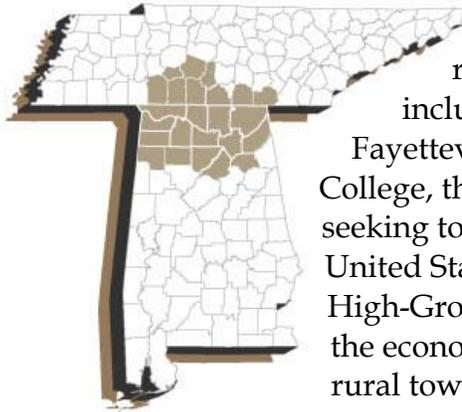


Tennessee Valley



The Tennessee Valley Second Generation WIRED region is comprised of fourteen counties in Alabama including Huntsville, and 9 counties in Tennessee including Fayetteville. Under the direction of Calhoun Community College, the Northern Alabama and Southern Tennessee Region is seeking to become the innovation powerhouse of the Southeastern United States. The community college, which is the recipient of a High-Growth Advanced Manufacturing Grant, has plans to bring the economic success of large cities like Huntsville to the small, rural towns of the region.

As the home to major economic resource centers like the Hudson-Alpha Institute for Biotechnology, the U.S. Army's Redstone Arsenal and NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville prospers economically and has a low rate of unemployment. The city stands in contrast to smaller towns in the region that face a shortage of jobs paying more than minimum wage and a lack of employment training resources for local citizens. This economic disparity is evident in the average annual pay of counties in the region. In 2004, the average annual pay in Huntsville/Madison County was \$41,230. In contrast, rural Franklin County's average annual pay was \$25,142 in the same year.

The collaborative effort will establish a Regional One-Stop Economic Development Center, provide training for high school counselors and faculty geared toward talent development and work with local programs like Junior Achievement and Tech Prep to provide local students with real world training.

As a Second Generation WIRED region, the Tennessee seeks to foster workforce preparedness in the region's high-growth fields of biotechnology, nanotechnology, engineering, information technology, manufacturing and healthcare. Through partnerships and integration, this region plans to increase the number of people with the necessary skills common to all these fields while providing guidance and support for workers ready to advance to more highly skilled and degreed positions. Additionally, the Tennessee Valley Second Generation WIRED region will play a major role in a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) activities, which could yield an additional 10,000 jobs for the region by 2012; thus, innovative strategies will need to be implemented to ensure a sufficient, skilled workforce.

Strategic partners include University of Alabama-Huntsville, Calhoun Community College, Tennessee Valley Authority, Marshall Space Flight Center, Port of Huntsville and regional education centers, businesses and local governments.

