



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP OF ALABAMA

The Economic Development Partnership of Alabama is a totally private, non-profit organization supported by 70 of Alabama's leading companies and institutions that are committed to quality growth. EDPA's mission is to provide private sector leadership for economic development in Alabama.

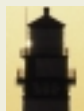
The Partnership was created in 1990 by a group of Alabama business leaders who shared a vision for a more dynamic economy in the state and a commitment to support the state's economic development efforts. Since its inception, EDPA has worked to accomplish several core objectives, which include: Raising Alabama's profile as an outstanding business location, attracting new industry, encouraging expansion of existing industry, growing jobs within the state and creating a better climate for growth.

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# VantagePoint

## Alabama, U.S.A.

A good indication of character is the manner in which someone reacts in a time of crisis. Our nation's collective response over the last two months should instill in all of us not only a great sense of pride, but a feeling of hope and optimism for our future.

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on our nation, Americans seemed to turn almost instinctively to those values and institutions that are at the core of our greatness—faith, family, charity, patriotism and dedication to service. The numerous examples of heroism, selflessness and compassion we have witnessed are a sign of the true strength of our nation.

It has been encouraging to see the tremendous outpouring of genuine national pride and patriotism throughout the country. Prominently displaying the American flag and singing God Bless America at public gatherings have become more than rituals—they are meaningful demonstrations of our unity. And, jolted into a new awareness of the debt we owe to public servants and military personnel who place themselves in harm's way, we have been reminded of the importance of honoring these sometimes forgotten heroes for their service.

Alabamians, never self-conscious about displays of patriotism and American pride, have a strong history of paying tribute to those who have sacrificed for our country. In fact, as you will find in the story on

the Alabama Veterans Memorial beginning on page 25, the National Veterans Day organization actually began in Birmingham. Today, the city's Veterans Day celebration is the nation's oldest and largest. It is fitting that Alabama is now home to such a memorial, built largely on

private contributions in funds, time, talent and service.

When we first visited the idea of a story on the Alabama Veterans Memorial earlier this year, it was with the thought that it might be a timely article to coincide with Veterans Day. We also felt that it was a story that said something special about the people of

Alabama and the profound sense of pride they have as Americans.

We had no idea, of course, that our nation would soon be engaged in another conflict to protect our freedoms and make the world a safer place. Many Alabamians can be counted among the Americans who have already been called into active duty for our country. We keep them in our prayers as they go, just as we take time to remember those who have gone before—and to whom we owe so much.

May God Bless America, and each of you, your families and loved ones. ■

*Jacquie Shaia is president and CEO of the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama.*

