

Oxford Breaks Ground in Jefferson County, Ups Investment

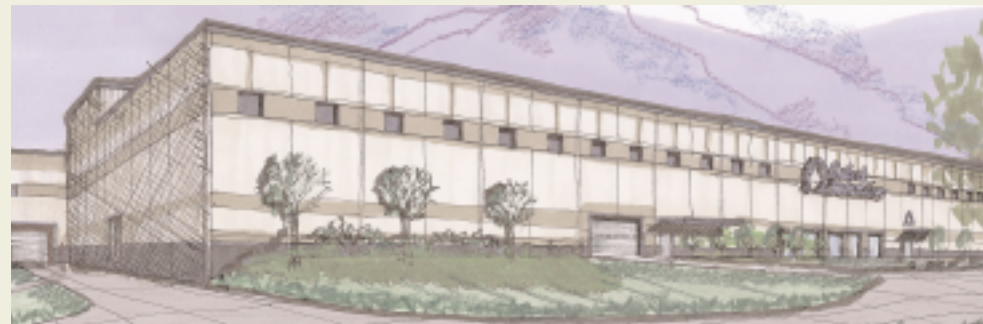
Oxford Automotive celebrated its groundbreaking in the Jefferson County Metropolitan Park by announcing that they will invest \$200 million and hire more than 300 at the 370,000 square-foot plant. The company had originally planned to invest \$100 million and employ 250.

Oxford's 50-acre site, along Alabama's automotive corridor of Interstate 20/59 will place it at an advantageous position for automotive manufacturers throughout the Southeast.

The facility will produce finished assemblies and underbody stampings. According to Oxford, the company produces parts used in more than 150 vehicle models made at 40 different auto plants around the world. ■

Tuscaloosa-Northport Named "All-America City"

The Tuscaloosa-Northport region was one of 10 cities nationwide to receive the All-America City Award from the National Civic League. The award recognizes cities for developing local solutions to national problems. Tuscaloosa-Northport spotlighted the Police Athletic League; RISE, a program for children with disabilities; and the Tuscaloosa Family Resource Center. ■



Oxford's Jefferson County facility

Kvaerner Locates at Former Navy Home Port

Kvaerner Oilfield Products will locate a \$15 million plant at the former Navy home port on Mobile Bay. Construction on the project will begin this month for a slated opening date of April 2003. The facility, which will be the assembly point for steel tube umbilicals, will employ 50.

The umbilicals will carry hydraulic fluids and communications lines from oil and gas platforms to undersea equipment. The home port site, Mobile Middle Bay Port, was a U.S. Navy base used for ship repairs and as a rest point. Kvaerner Oilfield Products is a division of Norway-based Aker Kvaerner AS. The Kvaerner Group has 42,000 workers in 30 countries and expects to reach revenues of \$6 billion this year. ■

Airbus UK Contract Brings Jobs to GKN Aerospace

GKN Aerospace Services won a \$600 million contract from Airbus UK for the design and manufacture of the Wing Trailing Edge panels for the Airbus A380 Superjumbo.

The contract will mean the addition of 100 jobs between GKN's two Alabama

plants in Montgomery and Tallassee. The Retirement Systems of Alabama helped facilitate the deal with a \$25 million loan to assist with start-up costs.

Design will be undertaken in Bristol and Cowes in the UK. Manufacturing will be shared between Cowes and Alabama, which already produce wing components for other Airbus aircraft. ■

Alabama Research Alliance to Foster Development

An executive order signed by the governor established the Alabama Research Alliance, a partnership among Alabama's research universities, the business community and state government to foster economic development in Alabama by investing in existing and new research initiatives.

The research alliance will focus on investing in and promoting research in space; science; technology and defense; automotive manufacturing and production design; agriculture; biomedicine and cancer research; and aviation computer electronics.

The board will consist of 13 members, including the chancellor of the University of Alabama system, the presidents of Auburn University, the University of South Alabama, Alabama A&M and Tuskegee University; and seven business leaders, who will be appointed by the governor to serve six-year staggered terms. The governor will serve as chairman. The alliance will be designated as a state agency to accept federal funds appropriated or allocated by Congress to the state for scientific research. ■

Research Center to Help "Move Space Travel into the 21st Century"

Officials at the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville recently broke ground on a \$30 million administration and lab building for the Propulsion Research Center.

The Propulsion Research Laboratory will be housed on a 21-acre site on Redstone Arsenal. It will be occupied primarily by

propulsion scientists and technologists from the Marshall Center's existing Propulsion Research Center.

The 108,000-square-foot facility will provide office and laboratory space for propulsion research and small-scale experiments supporting cheaper, more efficient and safer access to space. Studies will be conducted in a number of fields, including solar energy, advanced chemical propulsion technologies, and processes based on fission, fusion and antimatter. Construction is expected to be completed in April 2004. ■

Alabama Wins Top Educational Award

The Alabama Department of Education's Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) recently garnered the State Innovation Award from the Education Commission of the States. The ECS presents the annual award to a state that exhibits excellence in a policy area relating to the current ECS Chairman's Initiative.

Currently, there are 424 ARI Literacy Demonstration Sites across the state. The goal of the initiative is to improve reading instruction and achieve 100 percent grade-level literacy in the public schools. ■