

1,000 FEET



**EASY ACCESS:** An underpass that connects downtown with nearly 80 acres of undeveloped land along the Mississippi River opened on March 18. The structure, which runs under the Canadian National railroad, is a private venture between developer Pete Clements and Hollywood Casino. The underpass is the first phase of Clements' River Park mixed-use development, which will include a 10-acre riverfront park, hotels, residences, office space, retail and an entertainment complex.

## COMPANY NEWS

- AWC has opened a sales and distribution center in Fort Worth, Texas. The office, which has nine employees, will concentrate on the sale of electrical products to industrial and commercial contractors. AWC has more than 300 employees, working out of 23 offices across the South.
- Baton Rouge General has opened the Capital Region's first comprehensive limb preservation program, which targets people at risk for amputation because of diabetes, chronic wounds or vascular disease.
- The Baton Rouge Coca-Cola production facility was featured on the National Geographic Channel program *Ultimate Factories*. The program looked at how Coca-Cola is able to produce 1.7 billion servings per day of the popular soft drink to consumers worldwide. The Baton Rouge plant was featured because it is considered to be the most state-of-

the-art plant in the U.S. and is the only certified "green" bottler in the U.S.

- The city of Zachary has unveiled its updated website, [cityofzachary.org](http://cityofzachary.org). The website includes information on city departments, permits, inspection and zoning, as well as frequently asked questions, photographs of department heads, contact information, news and an events calendar.
- The ExxonMobil YMCA held a grand opening on March 14 for its 12,000-square-foot facility in Howell Place. The Y features a fitness center and a heated outdoor pool, along with a gymnasium that is part of a cooperative agreement with BREC.

• MAPP Construction and Sweden-based Skanska are serving as construction manager at risk for LSU's public hospital in New Orleans. The MAPP-Skanska team will ensure the University Medical Center comes in under its \$1.2 billion budget and on time for its spring 2015 completion. The team is responsible for hiring all trade contractors and subcontractors who will build the 424-bed hospital.

• Neighbors Federal Credit Union has relocated its Airline Highway branch to a larger, full-service facility at 13697 Coursey Blvd. The new branch, with an expanded drive-thru and lobby space to more effectively serve Neighbors' members, opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on March 7.

• Omnicademy, a free educational portal that allows universities to share their course content, has received a \$500,000 investment from the New Orleans-based South Coast Angel Fund. This is the first investment from the fund, which targets startup technology

companies in Louisiana and the Gulf Coast for investment.

• Mark Simmons has created Simmons Asset Management, a registered investment advisory firm. Simmons specializes in helping investors define and reach their financial goals, and the company's primary clients include investors who are interested in growing their wealth and moving up in economic status.

• Starmount Life Insurance Company's issuer credit rating has been upgraded to "bbb+" from "bbb" by A.M. Best Co., affirming the financial strength rating of B++ [Good]. The outlook for both ratings is stable.

• The St. Francisville-based Relocation Center has partnered with Pinnacle Entertainment to provide relocation services for eligible new employees and transfers to its Baton Rouge casino and hotel, which are scheduled to open in the first quarter of 2012.

## ACCREDITATIONS/ CERTIFICATIONS

• Sean Flynn, with Northwestern Mutual of Louisiana-Baton Rouge, has completed the education and examination requirements to become a financial adviser.



Flynn

## APPOINTMENTS/ MEMBERSHIPS

• Frank P. Simoneaux, of counsel for Gordon, Arata, McCollam, Duplantis & Egan, has been reelected as chairman of the Louisiana Board of Ethics.

• Hancock Holding Company has appointed seven current members of Whitney Holding Corporation's board of directors to the Hancock board, effective following the anticipated merger between the companies during second-quarter 2011. They are: Richard B. Crowell, Hardy B. Fowler, Terence E. Hall, R. King Milling and Eric J. Nickelsen, who will join the Hancock board; and Milling, Alfred S. Lippman and Thomas D. Westfeldt, who will serve on the board for Whitney, which will operate in Louisiana and Texas after the merger.

• Mark Staley, an associate director with Postlethwaite & Netterville, has been appointed to serve on the Sage Business Partner Advisory Council, which represents the partner community across the country.



Staley

• Dr. Ricardo Rodriguez has been installed as president of the Louisiana Orthopaedic Association.

• Robelynn H. Abadie, CEO/founder of Abadie Financial Services, has been appointed to the board of directors of the Louisiana Health Plan representing the National Association of Insurance and Finance Advisors-Louisiana.



Abadie

• Solutions Through Science has elected officers for 2011. Executive committee officers are: J.F. Accardo, chairman; Judith Nordgren, vice chair; Dan Borné, treasurer; Joe Andrepont, secretary; and Beverly Smiley, execu-



## COMPANY NEWS

VooDoo BBQ & Grill made the *Entrepreneur Magazine* list of the top 500 franchises. Baton Rouge-based VooDoo was ranked 326th overall and finished 23rd on the list of top new franchises. The list is based on objective, quantifiable measures of a franchise operation, such as financial strength, growth rate and size of system. VooDoo has 12 locations across south Louisiana and is looking to expand nationwide.