

TOMMY J. KURTZ, CEcD, MPA

Tommy J. Kurtz was named President and CEO in 2006 of the newly created Ascension Economic Development Corporation, a non profit corporation created in 2005 by the business community and Parish council to spearhead economic development for Ascension Parish. Since 2006, Kurtz has spearheaded the development of the new organization with such key projects as the first certified megasite along with Mississippi River in Ascension, the first food kitchen incubator to grow small food businesses in Louisiana, the development of a new GIS program for use for economic development, the launch of a downstream specialty chemical attraction program, and the ongoing development of an office and business park for the Parish. Kurtz also located the Dynamic Fuels (Tyson) biofuels project, the 84 Lumber distribution center outside Gonzales, the Kelloggs Distribution Center and the Kinder Morgan liquid bulk facility and assisted in the expansions of local companies including Bevel Tech, Dupont, and Pearce Foundry. Kurtz has also raised over \$700,000 in private and public grants for both infrastructure needs for company projects and for AEDC's targeted industry development projects.

Tommy has over fourteen years experience in economic development and is the youngest Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) in the State of Louisiana. Tommy was the former Senior Vice President of Greater New Orleans, Inc. (formerly MetroVision, the regional New Orleans Economic Development Agency of the New Orleans Chamber) for six and a half years where he managed a staff of eight focused on business development for the ten parish New Orleans region.

Tommy was instrumental in locating key projects to the New Orleans area including CG Railway, a logistics company to the Port of New Orleans; developing a state incentive package to retain the Northrop Grumman-Avondale shipyard; Service Zone, a major call center to Bogalusa; the Charlotte Hornets relocation; the Folgers Coffee expansion, and many others. He has also been involved during past legislative sessions in advocating new incentive programs in the State including revisions to Quality Jobs Program, the Digital Media Tax Credit Program, and the Research and Development Tax Credit Program.

Tommy has also worked for Entergy Corporation's Economic Development Group as a national industrial recruiter and then a community developer for the Baton Rouge/Florida Parishes region and directed business retention for the City of New Orleans in mid-1990s.

Tommy serves as Vice-President of LIDEA, the Louisiana professional economic developers association. He is a board member and founder of the Ascension Economic Development Foundation, which provides private sector funding for AEDC's major projects, and is chairman and founder of the Ascension Fresh Market farmers market.

Tommy was named to the " Power Generation" in ***New Orleans City Business*** in 2004 and was also named as ***Gambit Weekly's*** "40 under 40", given to New Orleans area most influential young leaders under forty years of age, in 2002.

Tommy has an undergraduate degree in economics and English from Boston College in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts (1989) and a Masters Degree from LSU in Public Administration (1991). He is a graduate of the Economic Development Institute (EDI) at the University of Oklahoma (1997).

Tommy is married to the former Rachel Everett, a registered nurse. They live in Prairieville with their two children, Dylan (7) and Sarah (8) who both attend St George Catholic School.