

NCEDA named one of Top 20 in U.S.

By Kacie Goode

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With a new distillery on its way and 10 expansion projects seen last year, the Nelson County Economic Development Agency (NCEDA) has been named one of the Top 20 Micropolitan Economic Development Agencies in the U.S.



KACIE GOODE/The Kentucky Standard

Jason Goatee, with Barton 1792, uses a mirror to quickly inspect barrels as they come down the line Thursday morning. The distillery contributed to the county being included in the Top 100 for economic growth with its employee expansion last year.

The ranking comes from Site Selection Magazine, which looks at the number of new and expanding economic development projects that occurred within each county last year, said NCEDA president Kim Huston.

Huston noted that NCEDA was the only agency in Kentucky to be listed in the magazine's Best to Invest rankings.

"We are honored to be listed in this best of the best by Site Selection Magazine, and we are certainly in good company with some of the most successful communities in the country," Huston said in a press release. "We knew that 2014 was an extremely busy and very successful year for NCEDA and the Bardstown Industrial Development Corporation."

According to the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development, Nelson County reported one new industry announcement and 10 expansion projects.

"In addition to these projects, we also hosted six additional prospects who have considered Nelson County as a future location," Huston said.

She said part of what makes the county a strong contender for projects is the community.

"The quality of life and livability amenities are important factors when companies choose a location," Huston said. And to the companies who chose to locate in Nelson County, Huston and the agency are grateful.

“They could have chosen to grow their company in any other community,” she said.

The agencies were ranked based on new jobs, new jobs per 10,000 residents, amount of new investment and new investment per 10,000 residents.

Huston said while new businesses are being attracted to the county, it was the community’s trademark — the bourbon industry — that brought the most investment.

“Each local distillery expanded their facilities and added jobs,” Huston said.

Barton 1792 Distillery, she said, had one of the largest expansions.

Amy Preske, spokesperson for Sazerac — Barton’s parent company — said since Sazerac purchased the distillery six years ago, 236 new jobs have been created.

The distillery has a total workforce today of 412.

The most recent expansion last year included the purchase of new equipment to increase production capacity. And in 2013 a new, 3,000-square foot distribution center was opened on Withrow Court. Preske said the previous distribution center was repurposed for bottling operations.

Aside from the bourbon industry, Huston noted expansion in the automotive industry, with suppliers expanding facilities and adding employees to keep up with new contracts.

The success of the county’s economic development and reputation, Huston said, can be credited to “local leaders with the foresight to have available industrial land with all the infrastructure and in close proximity to major highways.”



KACIE GOODE/The Kentucky Standard
Keith Mattingly, with Barton 1792, uses a heating tool to seal bottles Thursday morning. The distillery contributed to the county being included in the Top 100 for economic growth with its employee expansion last year.



KACIE GOODE/The Kentucky Standard
Ronnie Vittitow drills barrels Thursday morning at Barton 1792.