

2012 BATON ROUGE AREA CANVAS WORKSHOP

Letter From the Chair

Dear Canvas Workshop Participants and Those Considering Participating:

Tucked along the banks of the Ohio River, Louisville, Kentucky is a city that has quietly worked its way into becoming a true American success story. The creation of this story is why we will visit the area during our 2012 Baton Rouge Area Canvas Workshop. The trip, scheduled for March 25-27, 2011, will be an opportunity to learn about a Southern city that has solidified its economic prowess through a number of diverse and dynamic strategies.

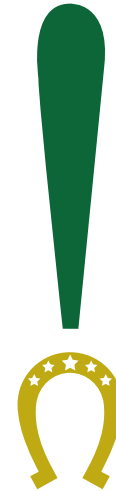
Like the Capital Region, Louisville has been recognized by numerous third-party rankings that highlight its accomplishments. It was named one of the ten best cities for commuters by *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* magazine; the second-best housing market in the United States by *Forbes.com*; one of the ten best cities for families, education, and recreation by *Parenting.com*; the fortieth-most literate city in America by Central Connecticut State University; the fourteenth best city for business and careers by *Forbes*; one of North America's small cities of the future by *Foreign Direct Investment* magazine; and among the ten best college towns by *Livability.com*. On the quality of life side, it was named the fourth-most photo-friendly city in America by *Popular Photography* magazine; one of America's top twenty-five bicycle-friendly cities by *Bicycling Magazine*; one of the 100 safest cities in America by *FreeBackgroundChecksUSA.com*; and in the top twenty-five of U.S. cities with the most ENERGY STAR buildings as reported by the EPA.

With just over 990,000 people, Louisville is slightly larger than the Baton Rouge area. The region, however, has overcome many of the same challenges that we are faced with today. As a river city, it has leveraged its shipping and cargo history to create Worldport, the worldwide air hub for UPS. It has also created innovative solutions in areas such as public transit, talent retention and attraction, public education, international business development, and downtown development.

Some of the subjects that we may potentially experience include:

In February of this year, Louisville's mayor created the Office for Globalization. The office, housed within the city-county government, is designed to assist local businesses as they attempt to globally expand their marketplace. It works in conjunction with the Louisville-based World Trade Center Kentucky, which provides consulting and education services to these companies as well. As we prepare to greatly increase our international business development efforts, organizations like these will provide invaluable insights.

Louisville and the surrounding Jefferson County have incorporated a number of initiatives to solidify their economic future through the educational attainment levels of their children. The system, along with the metro government and Greater Louisville, Inc., created the Every 1 Reads program. The initiative aims to ensure that every area child can read at or above their grade level. Since its inception, the number of children reaching the reading-grade level mark has increased ten percentage points.



**BATON ROUGE AREA
CANVAS WORKSHOP**
— LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY —
2012

Focusing on post-secondary education, a public-private partnership called 55,000 Degrees was created with the mission of adding 55,000 bachelor's and associate's degrees (40,000 bachelor's and 15,000 associate's) within a ten-year period ending by the year 2020. Participants include officials from city-county government, economic development, public education, parochial education, higher education, the business community, and the non-profit community.

Another area where Louisville has made significant impact is talent development. Over the past few years, it has implemented a number of initiatives focused on retaining and attracting the best and brightest. These include the Talent Attraction Forum, a network for human resources professionals to exchange retention and recruiting ideas and best practices; Intern to Earn, a regionwide internship program; Louisville 101, a half-day orientation program for newcomers to the community; Louisville Reunion, an annual reception held in a competitor city designed to reconnect with former city residents in the hope of recruiting them back; the Greater Louisville Community Branding Project, a marketing strategy that aims to increase the brand profile of the region among talented individuals; and the Greater Louisville International Professionals, a resource for foreign-born residents that works in unison with the aforementioned globally focused Office for Globalization and World Trade Center Kentucky.

As you can see, Louisville does not lack in learning opportunities. This trip promises to be an exciting, information-filled endeavor. I hope that you will commit to joining us as we travel to a city that promises to inspire.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Scott Hensgens', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Scott Hensgens
2012 Baton Rouge Area Canvas Workshop
Chair