

# The Sky's The Limit

*PASSENGER BRIDGE PART OF OVERALL UPGRADE PLANS AT SHREVEPORT REGIONAL AIRPORT*

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Airport Authority approves \$14.7 million budget.

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**LTRI celebrates with ground breaking**

A ground breaking ceremony was held Tuesday, Aug. 24 for the Louisiana Tech Research Institute (LTRI). The ceremony celebrated the progress made on the future home of LTRI. The facility enables Louisiana Tech University to partner in new ways with industry and defense partners, provides Air Force Global Strike Command with a dedicated research and development and applied research center, attracts talent and industry, and serves as the official home for defense-related education for north Louisiana.

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FROM THE PUBLISHER ▼

Don't be a 'Solomon'



SPECHT

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction. — Proverbs 1:7 (New King James Version)

It's funny how things can come together in scripture to teach a valuable lesson. A favorite pastime of many who believe in Christ is to read the book of Proverbs in the Old Testament of the Bible. A large number of the proverbs are written by Israel's King Solomon after he had asked (and was granted) wisdom from God himself.

It would be natural to assume that King Solomon lived a fine, upstanding life, in fear of the Lord. However, the opposite was true. Solomon had 700 wives who influenced him to worship foreign gods. He was truly a "do as I say, not as I do," leader — so much so, that God punished him by taking his kingdom from his descendants.

Solomon's fall from grace is a lesson for all leaders. Much like the suffering bestowed on Solomon's kingdom, leaders' failings do not happen in a vacuum. In fact, one could argue the collateral damage caused by a leader's falls is much worse than any penalty the leader faces himself.

There is no such thing as a "victimless crime" when it comes to leadership. A leader must be far more intentional in his personal life than others. The more followers, the greater the responsibility.

Another scripture that illustrates this in the New Testament.

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we

“Much like the suffering bestowed on Solomon's kingdom, leaders' failings do not happen in a vacuum.

shall receive a stricter judgment. James 3:1

In full context, this scripture speaks to how what we say often leads to how we act. However, the idea of how a teacher (leader) is judged plays out as true so often in society.

Think about a prominent person who has done something that you would consider underhanded, illegal, or immoral. Now, try to imagine all the good they did prior to that act. It's hard to think about, isn't it? The judgment we pass on leaders who make a mistake, or come short of the mark, is much harsher than we attribute to others. We often feel that they "should know better."

From the leader's perspective, regaining the trust of followers is at best difficult, and at worst, impossible. So what is a leader to do?

The easy answer is "Be intentional in all things." However, that is not easy. More on that later.

As imperfect beings, we will mess up. That is a given. Perhaps the infraction is a reaction to a myriad of factors. Perhaps it is simply a lapse in judgment. Regardless of the reason or excuse, the intentional leader must own it. They must own up to their responsibility as quickly as possible, offering apologies and reparations quickly.

The quicker the leader acts on the

shortfall, the better the chances for forgiveness, or at the least, understanding. This is far from a perfect plan, but it does work from time to time.

There was one instance where I unintentionally offended someone with their photo in my publication. She was a young lady of color and I had not identified her in the photo I used. In my defense, I didn't identify any of the photo's subjects, as they were not provided to me by the person who owned the rights to the photo.

While I didn't intentionally do anything wrong, I didn't intentionally do anything right either. After I read, and re-read, her email, I decided to set up a meeting. She agreed.

At the beginning of our meeting, just after we shook hands, I said, "Before we begin, I would like to apologize to you."

"You would?"

"Yes. I would like to apologize for my actions, or lack thereof, which has caused this offense. While it wasn't intended, that is exactly what happened, and I am without excuse. Would you please forgive me?"

"I am certainly surprised by your quick and heartfelt apology. I know I may have reacted too harshly, as I am always seen as 'the girl of color' in my circles and this just set me off. I am more than happy to forgive you."

That exchange was the beginning of a dialog and a friendship that continues to this day. I was lucky that the quick apology was received well. I also learned that I needed to be more intentional in everything, including photo captions.

DAVID A. SPECHT JR. | PRESIDENT OF SPECHT NEWSPAPERS, INC.



## DOWNTOWN SHREVEPORT ▼

# Cirque du Lot event kicks off the Labor Day weekend

Kick off your long Labor Day weekend with a combination street fair/downtown artwalk/musical concert with fireworks, food and vendors thrown in for good measure! The excitement will happen Friday, Sept. 3, 5-10 pm at 400 Crockett Street at The Lot, the former Sportran bus terminal reimagined as an outdoor festival space. It will be the location of the first-ever Cirque du Lot, a riff on the popular Cirque du Lake street fair, the brainchild of Katy Larsen. Larsen is the owner of The Agora Borealis arts marketplace at 421 Lake Street, and the founder of the Louisiana Fashion Prize. Larsen and her Lake Street partners have hosted the Cirque on Lake Street since 2014, but this year took the opportunity to make a move a couple of blocks to the north. "What a better way to celebrate new neighbors than to collaborate in downtown with live music, food, vendors and all ages fun. I'm very excited about this year's Cirque du Lot," says Larsen. The Cirque is also acting as the September version of the Downtown Development Authority's Downtown Art Walk.

"Like Katy, we thought this was a great chance to pool our resources



for a night of art, music, and food," says Liz Swaine, Exec. Director of the DDA, which runs the Downtown Artwalk. "The last few weeks have been hard and hot and this seems like a great way to take a breath and just relax for a bit. I'm looking forward to the music and I always love seeing what creative new projects the artists are up to!"

The Cirque will move under the big tent as a free admission event.

The musical lineup includes: Haley Brooke 5-6:15pm, The Joanitones Duo 6:30-8pm, and Grammy Award nominee Buddy Flett from 8:15-10 pm. The music will take a brief pause at 8:30pm for a fireworks display.

While at Cirque, be sure to view Jake Dement's hanging art exhibit and watch art being created live by painter Michael Miller. Wander the art market that will feature artists Naomi Rae Hannis, Terry L. Harris, Debbie Arbs

Rickards, Isabelle De Joya Vea, Rachel Turner Fletcher, Marci Gatlin Hicks, Brandon Sooter, Caitlin Rose, Arthur Nerio, Whitney Bates, Hillary Frazier, Yolanda Barnes ART, Adam King, Linda Moss, Michael Miller, Connie Helaire Eaton, Thomas Baird, Betsy Levels, Dawn Ash, Megan Templeton, Mars Allen, Star Williams, Ben's Body Basics, Taylor Hicks and Maggie Mollisee aka Magotpie.

Enjoy food of all sorts, the bar inside The Lot, and iced coffee from Special Reserve Coffee Roasters. PrizeFest will be there to sell you tickets to the Louisiana Film Prize and other 'prize' events!

This is a family event, so children are welcome, as are well-behaved pooches on leashes. All on-street parking is free after 5 pm, and though most of the venue is outside, we do ask that you mask up if you unable to maintain social distance.

For more information, go to: [www.downtownshreveport.com/artwalk](http://www.downtownshreveport.com/artwalk) or the Cirque du Lot Facebook event.

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# It's time to talk about infrastructure



JOHNSON

Infrastructure is a pretty all-encompassing word. We talk about it all of the time and much of the time we mean roadways and bridges. But infrastructure digs deeper – broadband, utilities and now the words “clean energy.”

At a local and state level, we’ve focused on large projects that need some work – the Jimmie Davis Bridge and I-49 come to mind first as well as many local roads and bridges and the ever popular Bossier discussion – avoiding railroad tracks. We don’t talk about it as often, but we know we need to keep up with maintenance to not get ourselves even further down the best roads list.

In this year’s legislative session, the state passed – and the governor signed – the biggest transportation bill in 37 years when he endorsed a measure that would gradually boost state aid for roads and bridges by \$300 million per year.

On a national level the U.S. Chamber has been advocating for a large infrastructure bill to address issues with crumbling infrastructure as well as a growing move toward electric vehicles and their impact on the issue. But what we’ve all been wondering is – how would we pay for it?

The recent Senate-passed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is bipartisan legislation to increase federal infrastructure investments.

EVENT

## Be part of the discussion

Join us as we talk all things Infrastructure on our September Chamber Chat with Ed Mortimer, Vice President, Transportation Infrastructure, for the United States Chamber of Commerce. September 2, 10 a.m., via Zoom.

<https://bossierchamberofcommerce.growthzoneapp.com/ap/Events/Register/nLvxe7p?mode=Attendee>

We see some important things in this bill – infrastructure to improve flood resilience, a very important issue to all of Louisiana; as well as \$65 billion to upgrade broadband coverage, which provides a great opportunity to expand in unserved and underserved rural areas;

However, the legislation includes roughly \$170 billion in offsets over a decade to partially pay for \$517 billion of direct costs and over \$570 billion of total costs.

The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget estimates this will add about \$400 billion to deficits over the next decade.

We agree with this statement from Maya MacGuineas, president of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget.

“While we are pleased Republicans and Democrats have come together to move forward important public investments, this legislation falls far short of its promise to be fully paid for. We strongly support measures in the bill to reduce the tax gap, lower drug prices, and extend or impose new user

fees. But two-thirds of this package is paid for with smoke, mirrors, and debt. As CBO and others have shown, borrowing from the future undermines the economic benefits of new public investments. The last thing we need is to put another \$400 billion on the national credit card. Fortunately, there is still time to improve this legislation in the House. By supplementing the current pay-fors with additional revenue, spending reforms, and user fees, policymakers can fully finance these important investments while improving our nation’s long-term fiscal and economic outlook. That is something Democrats and Republicans should be able to agree to.”

What will happen to this bill is now in the hands of the U.S. House of Representatives but know that we will be keeping our eye on it, as well as any other national legislation that will greatly affect our area and our future.

LISA JOHNSON | PRESIDENT & CEO OF THE BOSSIER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

# Bossier Chamber representatives graduate from Community Development Institute

Jessica Hemingway, Vice President of the Bossier Chamber of Commerce, and Charley Kingery, Bossier Chamber Board Member and Sr. Business Development Manager at Weiland Corporation, was among the 28 individuals who were awarded graduation certificates during the 34th annual Community Development Institute – Central (CDI) at the University of Central Arkansas on August 6, 2021. Hemingway and Kingery completed all three years of the institute’s program of study and are both now qualified to sit for the Professional Community and Economic Developer exam. Hemingway

and Kingery received a scholarship from AEP SWEPCO to attend the third year program.

“What we have learned at CDI about building communities, collaborating with stakeholders and getting out in our own communities to make them better is unparalleled,” said Hemingway of her three years attending Community Development Institute. “Not only has this experience taught us so much to bring back and make a difference within our own region, it has given us all such a great network of professionals from across the South to lean on throughout the important work of

building community.”

CDI trains community leaders and economic development professionals on how to strengthen their local economies and build communities. This is achieved by developing the ability of participants to identify community assets, set goals, encourage collaboration and partnerships with stakeholders, and bring communities, organizations and businesses together to respond to a broad range of economic and quality of life issues.

The complete institute experience is a three-year program, with one week of training per year. Partici-

pants move through the program curriculum in cohorts, and are exposed to a comprehensive, applied approach to the field of community and economic development.

UCA is the birthplace for the Community Development Institute, which started in 1987 in partnership with Entergy, Southwestern Bell, and ARKLA. Since that time, CDIs have been established in Texas, Alabama, Idaho and Illinois, and a national governing and certification body, the Community Development Council, has been created.

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## BOSSIER PARISH COMMUNITY COLLEGE ▼

## Veterans Resource Center shows BPCC's military commitment



BATEMAN

Recent headlines remind us, once again, of our sacred duty to honor our military, veterans, and their families.

Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC) is proud to stand at the forefront when it comes to serving and supporting our military and veteran community, not only in northern Louisiana but, also, as they

deploy across the globe.

Whether they are veterans, airmen and women from Barksdale Air Force Base, or soldiers from Fort Polk and Camp Beauregard, we work diligently to provide degree programs and courses, both online and on-site, geared for convenience and adaptability.

Within the walls of BPCC's state-of-the-art Veterans Resource Center (VRC), veterans and military-affiliated students can close ranks to study, mentor, and adjust to campus life. BPCC's VRC also partners with the College's Cavalier Care Center to offer crisis counseling and disability services on campus for those in need.

For 10 consecutive years, BPCC has earned the distinction as both a "Military Friendly" and "Military Spouse" Friendly School by Victory magazine; the College has been named by LA's governor as a "Military & Veteran-Friendly Campus", and was recently voted as a "Military Community Champion"



by the Bossier Chamber of Commerce.

"It is all about developing a relationship with the student" says Susan Stakes, Program Manager of BPCC Veterans Resource Center. "Most people don't understand the difficulties faced by these warriors as they transition through many levels of

their career, deployments, readjustments to home life, and separation from service. As the Program Manager of the VRC, I make it my mission to walk our military-affiliated students through their journey so they can be successful."

Mrs. Stakes is married to a 28-year war veteran, so this is more than just a job to her: she notes, "Getting reacclimated into society as well as adjusting to home life over and over can be difficult. We must embrace these warriors and give them a soft landing while they navigate the new normal for their lives."

BPCC's new initiative (and the current buzz around campus) is "Operation Graduation/Mission Complete"; veteran graduates can emboss dog tags with their name, degree program, branch of service, and date of graduation. Tags are displayed in BPCC's VRC and serve to encourage those who are just starting their journey. This initiative is already being recognized at the national level, by the Department of Veterans Affairs in Washington, DC.

We are proud that our military-affiliated students and their families put their trust in BPCC, knowing they will be well-taken care of. This relationship is our way of saying "Thank you" to them for serving us; now, it is our turn to return the favor.

DR. RICK BATEMAN | BPCC CHANCELLOR

## BUSINESS FORUM ▼

## Raising Cane's founder and CEO Todd Graves reveals the 'secret sauce' for customer experience in the Sept. 8 Business Forum



What's the secret for turning customers into diehard fans? Raising Cane's founder and CEO Todd Graves will share his tried-and-true strategy in the September Business Forum webcast.

This webcast will broadcast at 11 a.m., Wednesday, September 8. Registration is free.

Graves has grown his restaurant chain to 500-plus locations globally; it is continually recognized for its unique business model, cool culture, community involvement and customer satisfaction. He has been honored with numerous industry awards and accolades, including being named one of the Top 100 CEOs in the U.S. by Glassdoor, an Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year. As



an active community partner, Graves and Raising Cane's have given more than 25% of the company's profits back to the communities where the restaurants operate, a practice that earned the company the SCORE Award for Outstanding Socially Progressive Business.

He is the host of the new docuseries Restaurant Recovery on Discovery+, helping restaurateurs across the country overcome the struggles

of operating during a pandemic. He has also made appearances on FOX's Secret Millionaire, Animal Planet's Treehouse Masters, and the Food Network's Food Court Wars.

The 21st Century Business Forum debuted in 2021, featuring a lineup of successful top executives, experts, and global thought leaders to share ideas and insights as business executives, entrepreneurs, owners and managers navigate the new year ahead. It airs on the second Wednesday of each month, interviewing guests in a Q&A format.

The 21st Century Business Forum is presented by BIZ Magazine and Bossier Chamber of Commerce. Registration is free; sign up at [businessforumusa.com/northwestla](https://businessforumusa.com/northwestla).



# BUILDING BRIDGES



Courtesy Photo  
A crane places a new passenger bridge at a terminal gate at Shreveport Regional Airport.

## Upgrades to passenger bridges at Shreveport Regional Airport part of customer experience improvements

The Shreveport Regional Airport is making major upgrades to improve their customer experience via installation of four new passenger boarding bridges.

Bridges at the American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, and Allegiant gates are slated to be replaced every month and a half through the end of the year.

"The bridges that are being replaced are nearly 20 years old which makes it very difficult to find parts for the bridges should something need replacing," said Mark Crawford, marketing and public relations manager for the Shreveport Airport Authority. "When a bridge is taken out of service for maintenance, passengers

must arrive and depart the airport gate via stairs, which can be difficult for some passengers. These newer boarding bridges should provide a much more dependable operation and an improved passenger experience."

Beginning Aug. 7, crews from AERO Bridgeworks, Shaw Equipment Service and Barnhart Crane Company removed the existing passenger boarding bridge from the American Airlines gate at Shreveport Regional Airport. A new bridge was then installed and will be brought into service over the next few weeks.

Existing boarding bridges at the Delta and Allegiant gates will be replaced with

newer boarding bridges.

"Making sure that passengers have a great experience while at Shreveport Regional Airport is important to us and the replacement of these passenger boarding bridges is just one of the many ways we are working to improve things for Ark-La-Tex residents as they travel through the airport," Stephanie Tucker, interim director of airports for the Shreveport Airport Authority, said via a press release.

A fourth bridge is being installed on Gate 3, which will be used as a common-use gate, allowing any airline, including

See, **BRIDGES**, Page 7



# Airport Authority approves \$14.7 million budget

Shreveport Airport Authority Board approved its 2022 operation budget during their Aug. 26 meeting.

The Shreveport Airport Authority’s 2022 operating budget totaled \$14,782,700 — consisting of \$4.288M from airline revenue, \$7.5M in non-aeronautical revenue, and aeronautical revenue of \$2.99M. This is a \$1.69M increase in revenue over the 2021 budget, and just over \$100,000 from the 2019 budget.

The revenue is expected to increase due to current activity from landing fees, corrected airline baggage amounts from 2021, and an increase in passenger facility charges.

Non-aeronautical revenue, which makes up 51% of the budget, is also forecasted to increase based on the run rate with an uptick in auto rental agencies, office rent, and a big upswing in parking lot revenue.

“We have a chaotic climate right now, but we chose three benchmarks — our benchmark for our highest number is 2019 and our lowest is 2020, and we also have the run rates for (the first half of) 2021. We collectively chose a figure based on those three benchmarks,” explained Teresa Pierce, fiscal coordinator for the Shreveport Airport Authority.

The Shreveport Regional Airport revenue for 2022 is forecasted to generate \$13,924,100 and the

Downtown Airport is expected to see revenues of \$858,600.

The 2022 budget expenses aligned with the budget. The expenses were broken down into categories of \$5.7M for personal services, \$327,900 in materials and supplies, \$3.7M in contractual services, \$420,100 in improvements and equipment, \$1.5M in transfers, and \$3.09M in other charges.

Personal services, the largest budget cost at 39%, increased by 17% over 2021. Contractual services increased by 38% compared to the 2021 budget, and improvement and equipment increased by 163% from the 2021 budget. Materials and supplies expenses were flat, while the other charges category saw a very minor decrease when compared with 2021. The transfers expenses category was down 22% compared to 2020.

“Due to COVID-19, we did greatly restrict and pair down the 2021 budget. That did include the removal of 13 positions, and we are adding those back in several departments,” Pierce said. “As in the revenues, you saw the 13% increase. There’s also the 13% increase in expenses.”

The budget will now move to be reviewed by the Shreveport City Council and is slated to be up for a vote of final approval in early December.

During the meeting, the board also voted to accept the Federal

Aviation Administration’s Airport Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant of \$4.4 million for the Regional Airport and \$59,000 for the Downtown Airport.

ARPA grants provide COVID-19 pandemic economic relief by reimbursing operational expenses, debt service payments, and costs related to combating the spread of pathogens at the airport. Airports can also use the money to provide rent relief to in-terminal retail and concession companies.

The board adopted a resolution to accept a grant from the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development’s aviation division for \$172,010, which will 100% fund the rehabilitation of the Downtown Airport’s perimeter fence. The board then awarded a contract to M&M Pipeline Acquisition for the replacement of the fence.

Air carrier numbers in July totaled 62,380 enplanements, which was 163% over July 2020.

This was largely due to Allegiant seeing a more than 160% increase this year, which is an 18% increase when compared to pre-pandemic numbers, and American Airlines only being 4% off their pre-pandemic numbers thanks to a 119% increase in July.

The entire year to date is up 27% over 2020, but still down 33% from the pre-pandemic numbers in 2019.

BIZ BITS ▼

## HOME FEDERAL BANK EXPANDING INTO MINDEN

Home Federal Bank, the wholly-owned subsidiary of Home Federal Bancorp, Inc. of Louisiana, announced that a team of five experienced and highly skilled professionals has been hired to open a loan production office in Minden, Louisiana, which will quickly be converted to a full-service banking center. Additionally, Home Federal Bank has appointed a new Advisory Board member to represent its Webster Parish interests.

Our new Minden team has over 100 combined years of banking experience in the Webster Parish market. “These individuals join us with a high level of experience and proven track record for successfully developing banking relationships in the Minden market. I am confident that we have chosen the best team to execute HFB’s expansion plans into my hometown,” said Jim Barlow, Chairman, President and CEO of Home Federal Bank.

Patony Morrow, Senior Vice President of Commercial Lending and Market Manager for Webster Parish, most recently worked as a commercial lender for a regional bank in Minden. He joins HFB with 25 years of Commercial Lending experience and a total of 37 years of banking experience within Webster Parish.

Lindsay McClaran, Vice President of Mortgage Lending, most recently was employed as a Mortgage Lender for a regional bank in Minden and has established a solid mortgage banking background over the past nine years.

Shirlene Frasier, Vice President and Branch Manager, began her career in banking in 1982 and joins HFB from a regional bank with a vast knowledge of customer service, management support, and retail operations.

Rounding out our team are Shannon Garrett, a Commercial Loan Processor, who brings over 20 years of banking experience, along with Samantha Kramer, Mortgage Loan Processor, who began her career in banking in 2018.

Mike Toland will serve as an Advisory Board Member of Home Federal Bank representing the Webster Parish market. Born and reared in Minden, Mr. Toland spent the first 15 years of his career with a regional retailer prior to his current position as President of the Fleming Group, where he has worked for the last 25 years. Mike is very active in the community serving as a Sunday School Director at his church, past Chairman for United Way, a member of the Greater Minden Chamber of Commerce, and as a Minden City Councilman.

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# BRIDGES

*Continued from Page 6*

charter flights, to use the gate as needed.

“Each time the gate gets used, that is additional revenue for the airport,” Crawford explained.

The Airport Authority purchased the bridges from JBT Corporation in November 2020. They then awarded a \$527,011 installation contract to AERO Bridgeworks in April this year.

The bridges were stored at no cost from November 2020 to June 2021. Beginning in June 2021, JBT Corporation informed the Airport that it would begin charging storage fees of \$5,570 per bridge, per month.

The Airport decided to have all four bridges transported at one time for installation.

“Due to the high storage cost and the high probability that COVID-19 could significantly delay transport

of the bridges — delaying the project and thereby incurring additional financial charges — the decision was made to transport bridges all at one time, avoiding trucking delays that would affect delivery of the bridges,” Tucker said during a special meeting held Aug. 6.

The Airport Authority voted at that meeting to approve additional costs of \$79,132.04 for services related to offloading, storage, and handling of the bridges.

The original plan was to have all existing bridges removed and decommissioned after each new bridge was unloaded and ready for installation. Since the decision was made to receive all four at once, that means double handling of the bridges for offloading and then removal.

Tucker said installation of all four bridges at one time would have

shut the airport down for 30 days. The installation cost would have also increased if the bridges were installed all at once.

The bridges’ age means they cannot be sold or used by another airport, so they will be declared surplus and be moved to on-airport storage site until they can be removed.

These upgrades are due to be followed in the coming years by new flooring, new lighting, updated wall coverings and new seating

“We know that Ark-La-Tex residents have options when flying from the region, so we are always working to improve the passenger experience at the airport,” Crawford said. “While COVID-19 has slowed these projects, the airport is committed to offering the best experience for passengers when traveling from Shreveport.”



# LTRI celebrates future home with ground breaking

BY STACEY TINSLEY  
BIZ. Magazine

A ground breaking ceremony was held Tuesday, Aug. 24 for the Louisiana Tech Research Institute (LTRI).

The ground breaking ceremony celebrated the progress made on the future home of LTRI. The facility enables Louisiana Tech University to partner in new ways with industry and defense partners, provides Air Force Global Strike Command with a dedicated research and development and applied research center, attracts talent and industry, and serves as the official home for defense-related education for north Louisiana.

Gov. John Bel Edwards noted the community's important relationship with Barksdale, specifically the base's impact on the area's economy.

"This is a \$28-Million investment that is going to greatly enhance national security because of the partnership with Barksdale Air Force Base," said Edwards. "It's going to help us attract and retain talent."



Edwards also stated that the I-20 Cyber Corridor is booming and everyone from the private sector to the Department of Defense is taking notice.

In late 2019, Edwards announced the state's commitment of \$10 million in Capital Outlay funding to build LTRI at the National Cyber Research Park.

Attendees at the ceremony also heard remarks from Louisiana Tech President Dr. Les Guice and Cyber Innovation Center Executive Director Craig Spohn.

"Fourteen years ago, we decided that we wanted to improve the quality of life of Bossier City, and we wanted to do that through a knowledge based economy. And today, there are as many people working in that sector as there are in the oil and gas sector in Bossier Parish," said Spohn. "There are \$150 million dollars of household incomes that weren't there. That's a 100% return on investment every year on the original investment on the four buildings you see out behind me."

"All of this has been accomplished

with my partnership with my good friend Dr. Les Guice. Without his help, I couldn't have done any of this," Spohn added.

LTRI will mark the fourth, and final, building originally planned for the current cyber park configuration.

The LTRI center is set to be completed in summer 2022.

LTRI is an established 501C3 and has been developed from the productive collaborations between Louisiana Tech, CIC, and the Bossier community to support the growth and secure the sustainability of Barksdale Air Force Base, including AFGSC, and leverage this presence for new and accelerated regional economic growth opportunities. LTRI fosters collaboration among government partners, academia, and industry and serves as the official home for strategic thought-, cyber-, defense-, and intelligence-related education, training, and workforce development programs for North Louisiana.

## WE SEE HOPE

When morning came to Louisiana, we were wide awake. Ready for what's next. And as we begin anew, Blue Cross stands ready to support you.

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# PPP LOANS

in 2021 BY THE #'s



**150,147** in total loans  
**\$4.95B** total awarded

\*according to SBA as of July 2021



**14,572** approved loans  
**\$729.2M** in loans



**Other services** No. 1 industry in total # of loans with 2,802 loans



**Health Care & Social Assistance** No. 1 industry in loan \$\$\$ with \$126,517,827

## Top 5 Loans:

- 1. Conquest Completion Services, LLC  
129 jobs + \$6,940,800 (loan 7-30-20)
- 2. Laboratory Management Services  
415 jobs + \$5,104,200 (loan 4-8-20)
- 3. Superior Bar & Grill, Inc.  
500 jobs + \$4,810,38 (loan forgiveness as of 6-22-21)
- 4. Lifeshare Blood Center  
372 jobs + \$4,797,0372 (loan forgiveness as of 6-9-21)
- 5. Ronpak  
500 jobs + \$4,606,248 (loan forgiveness as of 6-11-21)



The Paycheck Protection Program remained a vital way in 2021 for businesses to stay afloat and overcome challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Take a peak at updated stats on PPP:



**4,499** approved loans  
**\$215M** in loans



**Other services** No. 1 industry in total # of loans with 826 loans



**Health Care & Social Assistance** No. 1 industry in loan \$\$\$ with \$27,006,289

## Top 5 Loans:

- 1. Reiser Group Sonic Management Co., LLC  
500 jobs + \$3,876,483 (loan forgiveness as of 6-11-21)
- 2. Tim Icenhower Oil and Gas, Inc.  
184 jobs + \$2,458,710 (loan March 2021)
- 3. Hydroline, LLC  
174 jobs + \$2,321,337 (loan 4-5-20)
- 4. TDJ Oilfield Services  
210 jobs + \$2,235,671 (loan forgiveness as of 6-15-21)
- 5. Performance Proppants, LLC  
178 jobs + \$2,014,975 (loan forgiveness as of 1-11-21)



\*according to the Daily Advertiser, Aug. 10, 2021



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## PANDEMIC RECOVERY ▼

# Emergency rental assistance in Louisiana has paid \$26.4M out of \$161M

BY WILLIAM PATRICK  
The Center Square

Louisiana has paid \$26.4 million out of \$161 million in federally allocated Emergency Rental Assistance Program funds for 57 parishes since the program was launched in March.

The ERA program was created to help residents “who are at risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability due to the COVID-19 pandemic,” and works in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s eviction moratorium for parishes and counties with “heightened levels of community transmission.”

The CDC considers the entire state of Louisiana, as well as every other state except Maine, at high risk of COVID-19 transmission.

When asked about the funding disparity – about 16% of available funds paid over five months – a spokesperson for the Louisiana Office of Community Development cited issues stemming from the U.S. Department of Treasury.

“The processing of payments to applicants has been slowed by eligibility requirements and constantly changing program documentation guidelines issued by the U.S. Treasury,” the spokesperson said. “The state has utilized its on-line processing, and collaboration with other agencies to share data, in order to streamline and speed up its process.

“The state has steadily sped up its rental assistance disbursement since the program launched on March 5, 2021, more than doubling payments disbursed in the past month, and the speed of funding continues to pick up pace. The number of applications submitted also continues to climb, with more than 1,300 applications newly filed this week.”

The ERA program applies to renters and landlords. State data through Aug. 25 indicated Louisiana residents have started 32,198 applications for assistance, while 12,178 applications were submitted and 4,905 applications were approved. Another 10,122 requests for utility bill assistance also have been made.

A program status report for the



Photo by Erik Mclean on Unsplash

month of July showed \$7.86 million was paid to 1,370 households across the 57 parishes. In June, \$5.89 million was paid to 976 households, \$3 million was paid to 498 households in May and \$1 million was paid to 154 households in April.

The remaining seven of Louisiana’s 64 parishes – Caddo, Calcasieu, East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, Lafayette, Orleans and St. Tammany – are operating their own ERA programs. According to the state, the seven local government units have received \$59 million in emergency rental relief funds directly from the U.S. Treasury Department since March.

As of June 7, the most-recent data published by the New Orleans Office of Housing Policy and Community Development, \$5.4 million in rental assistance out of \$11.6 million in allotted funds had been distributed to qualifying residents in need.

An additional \$15.8 million in Orleans Parish local ERA funds are expected, in addition to a \$15.1 million commitment in state ERA funds from Gov. John Bel Edwards, the New Orleans OCD said.

The gap in disbursed funds versus allocated funds is not unique to Louisiana. The U.S. Treasury Department announced Wednesday only \$5.1 billion has been disbursed by state and local governments nationwide from the first round of ERA

funding occurring in December, totaling \$25 billion.

Another \$21 billion was approved through the American Rescue Plan Act in March, marking 11% of total ERA1 and ERA2 funds distributed to renters and landlords facing financial hardships in COVID-19 stricken communities across the country.

“One of the biggest challenges many state and local government programs continue to face in getting assistance to renters and landlords is application processing delays,” a Treasury Department statement said Wednesday. “According to public dashboards, hundreds of thousands of applications are in the pipeline beyond those that have already been paid.”

Treasury officials issued seven new recommendations as a result to “accelerate assistance to those in the pipeline in addition to those who have yet to apply.” Similar attempts to streamline ERA funding occurred in February, May and June.

An email response from Gov. John Bel Edwards’ office earlier this month said the Louisiana Emergency Rental Assistance Program “must work within the rules that the U.S. Treasury established.”

“However, once a tenant and a landlord submit all of the required information and have an approved application, they should expect to

receive rental assistance payouts in approximately two weeks,” a spokesperson said.

Landlords are among those who are hardest hit, as tenants cannot be evicted for failing to pay rent and rental assistance has been slow to compensate them.

Eloise Gauthier, a real estate agent and rental-income investor of more than 33 years said she’s had to sell 10 units to make up for losses since the federal eviction moratorium began.

“I’ve never seen anything like this,” Gauthier said earlier this month.

“They stood in line for three hours, and, to this day, they have not gotten any assistance,” she said about several tenants who applied in April.

Louisiana’s \$161 million allocation follows an earlier round of ERA1 funding totaling \$24 million.

“After September, programs that are unwilling or unable to deliver assistance quickly will be at risk of having their rental assistance funding reallocated to effective programs in other high-need areas,” the Treasury Department said.

“We constantly are re-examining the process in order to find a way to accelerate payments to landlords and renters,” the Louisiana Office of Community Development spokesperson said.



LEADERBOARD ▼

LA TECH RANKED HIGHEST  
PUBLIC UNIVERSITY IN  
LOUISIANA BEST COLLEGE  
RANKINGS 2022

Louisiana Tech University was ranked No. 2 in Louisiana's Best College Rankings 2022 by Niche. The University was the highest-ranked public institution in the state of Louisiana.

Niche.com is the "market leader in connecting colleges and schools with students and families," according to the organization's website. The rankings are based on reviews from students and alumni along with analysis of academic, admissions, financial, and student life data from the U.S. Department of Education.

"Niche is the market leader in connecting colleges and schools with students and families, helping more than 3.7 million students per year find an institution that matches their unique needs," said Tree George, Director of Admissions for Louisiana Tech. "Admissions professionals throughout the country value the Niche ranking system because of their focus on

academic, admissions, financial, and student life data from the U.S. Department of Education along with millions of reviews from students and alumni."

Factors considered include acceptance rate, quality of professors, average loan amount, alumni earnings, student-faculty ratio, quality of campus food and housing, ethnic composition of the student body, proportion of out-of-state students and international students, safety, diversity, athletics, all-around student life, median rent, access to amenities, and campus and local crime rates.

Tech's overall Niche grade is "A minus." In categories, Tech graded "A" in Athletics, "A minus" in Academics, Diversity, and Value, "B" in Campus, and "B minus" in Party Scene.

LOUISIANA MUSIC PRIZE  
ANNOUNCES TOP 10 FINALISTS

Louisiana Music Prize, the GRAMMY-affiliated competition for rising musicians, announced its 2021 Top 10 finalists Aug. 19 who will compete for a \$10,000 grand prize.

The competition will return in person

to downtown Shreveport during Prize Fest's first weekend, September 24 and 25. Each night will feature a showcase of 5 finalists, with the grand prize winner being determined by a combination of voting from the audience and a panel of music industry judges. For 2021, attendees and Music Prize artists will be required to show proof of vaccination or a negative COVID test.

"We are so proud of the diversity of faces, genres and geographies of this year's Music Prize Finalists," said Gregory Kallenberg, founder and executive director of the Prize Foundation. "Music Prize has always prided itself in helping the world discover the next big music act, so we are incredibly excited to see who wins Music Prize 2021."

Top 10 Music Prize Finalists

The American Hotel System, <https://www.americanhotelsystem.com>  
Been Stellar, <https://beenstellar.bandcamp.com>  
Chaynler Joie, <https://www.chaynlerjoieflow.com>  
Bond+Plus, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5h1bGMnBtY>  
Fighting for Frequency, <https://fighting4frequency.com>

Lance Thompson, <https://www.lancethompsonmusic.com>  
Natalie Price, <https://natpricemusic.com>  
Ponderosa Grove, <https://www.ponderosagrove.com>  
Pugh, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q463KUaVO3U>  
Soul Grooves, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xQ3toKyTWjA>  
In order to qualify for the Louisiana Music Prize, aspiring performers submitted short recorded sets of live performances. The registration pool was narrowed to 42 musical acts from across the country, curated by a panel of industry veterans. These bands then vied for the coveted Top 10 status during the Music Prize Qualifier which ran from July 23 through August 1, a 50/50 vote between online viewers and music industry professionals determining the Final Top 10.

This year's performers are coming to play from Louisiana, Michigan, Tennessee, and as far away as Arizona and New York. Also, for the first time, the Music Prize Finalists include 40% female acts. The genres are also diverse this year. Rock, hip hop, Americana, pop and metal will all be featured over the two nights of showcases.



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# Leading the micromanager



HAYNES

Micromanagement is defined as controlling every part, however small, of an activity or enterprise. Micromanagers feel a need to control information, approve every activity, be copied on all e-mails, and interject themselves in employees’ tasks to be sure the work is done exactly their way.

A micromanager is one of the worst and most destructive leaders. This leadership style robs employees of the opportunity to learn and grow, to advance within the company, to problem solve, and to use creativity for improvement. It demoralizes the team and makes the job boring. It causes unhealthy stress on the employees. This leadership style slows down productivity and communication and increases turnover, all of which waste money and time for the organization.

Like all of us, no leader is perfect. If your boss is a micromanager, you may be actively seeking

employment elsewhere. However, if you enjoy your co-workers and like the company you work for, there is a better solution.

The answer is to lead up. Leading up is learning what your boss’s weaknesses is that interferes with you being your best. Once you identify the weakness, determine how you can supply what your boss needs to minimize the weakness thereby improving your job.

For a micromanager, the need to know everything indicates a lack of trust in the staff. Knowing everything enables the micromanager to feel sure the work is done correctly. Lack of trust is the underlying weakness. The task then is to supply trust. Remember, trust is earned, not given.

Earning trust from a control freak means you must over-communicate. Describe what you will be working on, the people you will collaborate with, the steps to take that day, and how much time you plan to spend on your projects. Get this information to your boss before she/he has the chance to badger you. Be sure to submit the

information with a humble introduction such as “I know it is important to provide you with status updates of the projects you have assigned to me. With your permission, I will e-mail you each morning and afternoon to keep you informed.”

Lead your boss with the most powerful tool you have – influence. If you try to lead a boss using authority or manipulation or try to put the “bad boss” in his/her place, you could lose your job. Leading up requires tact, patience, respect, and a lot of humility.

Although it takes time, it works because you provide exactly what the micromanager needs. The bonus is you feel better because you have taken initiative. Consistency is key. After a while, the micromanager will trust that you will communicate the details and ultimately, the micromanagement behaviors will improve. Teach your co-workers this solution and you will have become a leader.

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ENTRELEADERSHIP ▼

# Could this be the one? Finding the right assistant



RAMSEY

One of my long-time leaders has a reputation for screening potential assistants harder than anyone else. This may seem a little unusual, but I like it. And the truth is an assistant is one of the most important hires you’ll make as a leader or small business owner. A great one allows you to focus on the big picture,

while they take care of the details. A bad one will leave you feeling like you’re working a separate, full-time job just to be able to function as a capable leader.

With a great assistant, life becomes easier, and you become more productive. Here are some ideas to consider in your search for a quality assistant:

## MAKE A LIST

Start by creating a comprehensive list of everything you need in an assistant, including important things they might say during the interview, their skills, how they communicate. Also, include everything you don’t want them to be.

Then, when the perfect assistant walks into your office and begins talking, you’ll know. You’ll start

mentally—or literally on a piece of paper—checking boxes. Bells will go off in your head, and you’ll start thinking, This is the one. This is the exact person I wrote down.

## WAIT FOR THE RIGHT ONE

As with all hires, you need to take your time, be patient and wait for the absolute perfect fit. You’re not looking for someone who sees the opportunity as a stepping stone, you’re trying to find someone you see yourself working with comfortably for many years.

Find out what they’d like to be doing with your organization two or three years from now. If they start talking about sales or marketing, you know they don’t really want to be an assistant.

## PASSION FOR THE ROLE

Simply put, does the person’s eyes light up when they’re talking about the job? Look for passion about the position and its responsibilities. Sometimes, they’ll get so excited they’ll start throwing around ideas—and telling you things they can do—during the interview.

## PAY ATTENTION TO THE ANSWERS

Always ask the candidate if they are organized. It may seem like a no-brainer, but every assistant needs that trait. Nearly everyone thinks they’re orderly, so it’s not really about the answer—it’s about how they say it and whether you believe it.

People who are truly organized often laugh a bit at this question. Lots of times it’s because they’ve heard jokes about it all their lives. They might even give funny examples of how they drive their spouse or relatives crazy with their need for order. If you listen close enough, you might hear things that tell you organizing gives them energy and a purpose—and they love it.

That’s what you’re looking for!

LEADERSHIP AND SMALL BUSINESS EXPERT DAVE RAMSEY IS CEO OF RAMSEY SOLUTIONS. HE HAS AUTHORED NUMEROUS BEST-SELLING BOOKS, INCLUDING ENTRELEADERSHIP. THE RAMSEY SHOW IS HEARD BY 18 MILLION LISTENERS EACH WEEK ON MORE THAN 600 RADIO STATIONS AND MULTIPLE DIGITAL PLATFORMS.





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