

2003 INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

MISSION: To recommend policy positions and programs to strengthen Louisiana's development of foreign trade, investment and international services.

2003 Trade Programs

On January 7 the WTC and the Louisiana Department of Economic Development sponsored a luncheon seminar for 30 participants at the WTC on **“Going Global: Getting Started in Exporting and Importing,”** conducted by **Ruperto Chavarri**, Director of the Louisiana International Trade Center, and WTC Managing Director **Eugene Schreiber**.

On January 9 the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Department of State, the WTC and other organizations sponsored a **Caspian Basin Energy Conference** for 150 in the Plimsoll Club. The Conference included three panel discussions and keynote luncheon addresses by: **Amb. Steven Mann, Caspian Basin Energy Diplomacy; Hon. Ross Wilson, U.S. Ambassador to Azerbaijan;** and **Hon. Larry C. Napper, U.S. Ambassador to Kazakhstan.** A special guest at the conference, **H.E. Hafiz Mir Jaslal Pashayev, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the U.S.,** also delivered remarks at the luncheon. Following the afternoon panels, conference participants met one-on-one with representatives from BP, the Export-Import Bank, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), and the Louisiana Department of Economic Development. The conference concluded with a Networking Jazz Reception in the Plimsoll Club.

On January 28 the WTC and other organizations sponsored a luncheon program for 64 participants in the Plimsoll Club to honor **Amb. Lindy Boggs** with the **WTC President’s Award for Distinguished International Service.**

On February 4 the WTC commenced **Spring Session of Foreign Language Classes** at the World Trade Center taught by Alpha Tech instructors. A total of 25 students are enrolled for the 11-week session. Classes in **Spanish, German,** and **Italian** are currently being offered.

On February 7 the WTC and the Louisiana Department of Economic Development sponsored a luncheon for 34 participants in the Plimsoll Club on **“Doing Business in Hungary and Central Europe”** featuring **Tamas Deutsch,** the Hungarian Trade Commissioner based in Chicago.

On February 12 the WTC, the New Orleans U.S. Export Assistance Center, and other organizations sponsored a luncheon for 80 participants in the Plimsoll Club on **“The President’s Economic Plan and What it Means for International Trade”** featuring **Maria Cino,** Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Director General of the U.S. Foreign and Commercial Service.

On February 12 the WTC published the completely updated 2003 edition of the Louisiana International Trade Directory, the official import-export Directory of Louisiana. The

Directory contains **over 1,700 detailed listings of Louisiana exporters, importers, trade services, and organizations.** Prices are \$40 for the binder (\$20 for WTC members) and \$100 for the CD Rom (\$50 for WTC members).

On February 18 the WTC, the Louisiana Department of Economic Development, the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, and other organizations sponsored a special luncheon program for 45 participants in the Plimsoll Club featuring a **9-member delegation of tourism and business leaders from St. Maarten/ St. Martin, Curacao, and Anguilla.** The delegation was visiting New Orleans to promote the new passenger and cargo service of TransCaribbean Airways between New Orleans and St. Maarten/St. Martin and Curaçao.

On February 20 the Peace Corps held a Recruitment Meeting in the WTC's 29th floor Board Room for 40 prospective Peace Corps Volunteers.

On February 25 El Financiero, the leading business newspaper in Mexico, conducted a luncheon briefing in the WTC's 29th floor Board Room on **“The Economic Business Outlook in Mexico”** for 25 representatives of Louisiana companies, government agencies, and economic development organizations and discussed plans for a special promotional insert on Louisiana in a forthcoming issue of the publication.

On March 19 the WTC, along with the Federal Maritime Commission, co-sponsored a free seminar in the WTC's 29th floor Board Room on **“Navigating the Regulations: An Overview of the Responsibilities of Vessel Operators, Ocean Transportation Intermediaries and Maritime Shipping Service Users in U.S. Foreign Trades.”**

On March 21-22 the Consular Corps College of the United States held its annual meeting in New Orleans in the WTC's 29th floor Executive Offices. On Friday, March 22 the WTC and the Consular Corps College co-sponsored a luncheon for 105 participants in the Plimsoll Club featuring **Hon. Lawrence Dunham, Assistant U.S. Chief of Protocol.** The luncheon was open to the business community and widely publicized throughout the state.

On April 11 the WTC and other organizations sponsored a breakfast briefing for 34 participants in the Plimsoll Club on **“Bridging the Atlantic-The U.S./U.K. Relationship”** featuring **Sir Thomas Harris, HM Consul-General, New York** and Director-General, Trade and Investment, USA.

On April 22 the WTC and 10 other organizations sponsored the annual **C. Alvin Bertel Award luncheon program** for 215 participants in the Plimsoll Club **honoring U.S. Senator John Breaux** for his significant contributions to the Greater New Orleans port area.

On April 23 the WTC, the World Affairs Council of New Orleans, and other organizations sponsored a breakfast program for 70 participants on “**New Trade Opportunities with Canada**” featuring **H.E. Michael Kergin, Canadian Ambassador to the United States**.

On April 24 the New Orleans U.S. Export Assistance Center held a half-day **Global Diversity Initiative Business Workshop** for 28 participants in the WTC’s 29th floor Board Room. The workshop was an export training seminar for women and minority firms in Louisiana.

On April 25 the WTC, the World Affairs Council of New Orleans, and other organizations sponsored a luncheon program for 40 participants in the Plimsoll Club on “**Outlook on Africa: What It Means for U.S. Businesses**” featuring **Hon. Walter H. Kansteiner, III Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs**.

On April 28 the WTC, the Honorary Consulate of Belgium, and other organizations sponsored a luncheon program in the Plimsoll Club for 45 participants featuring **H.E. Franciskus van Daele, Ambassador of Belgium to the United States**, speaking on “**The Future of Transatlantic Relations.**”

On May 13 the WTC, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, MetroVision, and other organizations sponsored an expanded luncheon seminar for 53 participants in the Plimsoll Club on the “**U.S.-Chile Free Trade Agreement**” featuring **H.E. Andrés Bianchi, Ambassador of Chile to the United States** and other speakers.

On May 14 the City of New Orleans, the World Trade Center, and the World Affairs Council sponsored the first **International Organizations Summit** for 65 participants in the Plimsoll Club. The summit was designed to provide international organizations with resources and information and the opportunity to network with each other.

On May 19 the WTC and other organizations sponsored a luncheon briefing for 50 participants in the Plimsoll Club on the proposed **U.S.-Central American Free Trade Agreement** featuring **Margaret Hanson-Muse**, the Commercial Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in San Jose, Costa Rica.

On May 22 the WTC and the City of New Orleans sponsored an **afternoon reception** for 35 participants in the Plimsoll Club honoring **David Fonseca, Mayor of Belize City** and a nine-member delegation from Belize.

On May 22 the WTC hosted an **open house reception** for 40 participants in the 29th floor executive offices **to celebrate the return of the New Orleans U.S. Export Assistance Center to the WTC building**. Special guests at the reception included the Mayor of Belize City and members of the Louisiana District Export Council.

On May 23 the WTC, U.S. Export Assistance Center, Louisiana Department of Economic Development, and other organizations sponsored a breakfast briefing for 30 participants in the Plimsoll Club on **“Doing Business with South Africa”** featuring **Johnny Brown**, Commercial Attaché with the U.S. Embassy in South Africa.

On June 3 the WTC, the Honorary Consulate of Austria, and other organizations sponsored a luncheon program for 30 participants in the Plimsoll Club on **“Austria Within an Enlarged European Union: Implications for U.S. Business”** featuring **Gudrun Hager**, Austrian Trade Commissioner in Chicago.

On June 5 the WTC, Bank One, and other organizations sponsored a luncheon seminar for 30 participants in the WTC’s 29th Floor Executive Offices on the **“International Sales and Distribution Agreements”** featuring **Patrick B. Fazzone**, a partner with the law firm of Tighe Patton Armstrong Teasdale, PLLC, based in Washinton, D.C.

On June 18 the WTC and other organizations sponsored a luncheon program in the Plimsoll Club for 53 participants on **“The Outlook on International Trade and Trade Finance”** featuring **Michael Spivey**, Director of Business Development with the U.S. Export-Import Bank.

On June 25 the WTC, Honorary Consulate of Thailand, and other organizations sponsored a luncheon program for 52 participants in the Plimsoll Club on **“Thai-U.S. Economic Relations: Partnership for Mutual Growth”** featuring **H.E. Sakthip Krairiksh**, **Ambassador of Thailand to the United States**.

On June 26 the World Trade Center, the Louisiana Technology Council, the Consulate General of Israel, and other organizations sponsored a luncheon program in the Plimsoll Club for 50 participants on **“Israel: Your Company’s Next Great Business Opportunity”** featuring **Paul Thanos**, Deputy Director of the Office of the Middle East, U.S. Department of Commerce; **Boaz Radai**, Economic Affairs Minister, Embassy of Israel; and **Todd Gandy**, Territorial Manager, Check Point Software Technologies.

On July 1-5 WTC President Donna Fraiche was one of the three co-leaders of a 53-member **Louisiana Trade Mission to Costa Rica** organized by the WTC and MetroVision. The purpose of the mission was to promote Louisiana's trade, transportation, tourism, and other reciprocal interests with Costa Rica. **The agenda included a reception hosted by Costa Rican President Abel Pacheco**, who did his medical internship at hospitals in New Orleans and Alexandria. Another major event (as was the case last year in Honduras and the year before in Nicaragua) was **U.S. Ambassador John Danilovich's Fourth of July official reception at his residence for 600 top Costa Rican officials** and many of the country's business, professional, cultural, and other leaders. The Ambassador’s reception featured Louisiana music and cuisine once again prepared by Chef Roy Lyons of the Frog City Café in Rayne. In addition, a series of meetings, site visits, and other events in San Jose were held

with Costa Rican counterparts to discuss a wide range of business, economic development, and other opportunities. The principal thrust of the mission was in four areas: **(1) Trade and Transportation; (2) Sports Management; (3) Tourism; and (4) Health Care.** The mission members also promoted the upcoming CAFTA negotiating round to be held in New Orleans at the end of July (see July 28-August 1 item below).

On July 22 the WTC, in conjunction with the New Orleans U.S. Export Assistance Center, held a **Manufacturing Roundtable Breakfast** for 70 participants in the Plimsoll Club conducted by **William H. Lash III, Assistant Secretary, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.** The Department of Commerce was seeking feedback and insights for a report requested by Commerce Secretary Don Evans describing the problems that U.S. manufacturers face and to make recommendations on actions the Administration should take to revitalize the manufacturing sector of the U.S. economy.

On July 23 WTC and other organizations hosted a luncheon program in the Plimsoll Club for 42 participants featuring a **group of 19 transportation, economic development, and planning officials** from **Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland,** which comprise the Southern African Customs Union (SACU). The group visited several of Louisiana's principal deep-water ports and intermodal facilities. The luncheon served as an opportunity for the African visitors to meet their transportation and other counterparts from Louisiana.

On July 28-August 1 New Orleans **hosted the 6th round of the U.S.-Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) negotiations.** Official representatives from each of the six countries forming the CAFTA region (**the U.S., Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua**) participated. On July 29, the WTC hosted a forum on **"CAFTA: The Business Perspective"** for 190 participants. The forum included a morning program featuring two keynote speakers and two panels with experts from various industries who discussed the likely effects of CAFTA on business from the U.S. and Central American perspectives. The afternoon program was comprised of five Country Briefings featuring speakers each of the Central American countries. The keynote breakfast speaker was **Hon. Anabel Gonzalez, Costa Rican Special Ambassador for U.S. Trade Affairs** and Costa Rica's Chief CAFTA Negotiator. The keynote luncheon speaker was **Hon. Regina K. Vargo, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for the Americas.**

On August 13 the WTC held a luncheon workshop in the 29th floor Board Room for 24 participants on **"Going Global: Getting Started in Exporting and Importing"** conducted by **Ruperto Chavarri,** Director of the Louisiana International Trade Center, and WTC Managing Director **Eugene Schreiber.**

On August 26 the WTC and other organizations sponsored a luncheon program in the Plimsoll Club for 59 participants on **"The Future of Louisiana's Sugar Industry"** featuring

Charles Melancon, President of the American Sugar Cane League, and **Don Phillips**, Trade Specialist with the American Sugar Alliance in Washington, D.C.

On August 28 the WTC, the Consulate General of Spain, and other organizations sponsored a luncheon program in the Plimsoll Club for 62 participants on “**United States and Spain: A Promising Future**” featuring **H.E. Javier Ruperez, Ambassador of Spain to the United States**.

On September 2 the fall session of the **WTC’s foreign language classes** commenced, with classes offered in beginning, intermediate, and advanced Spanish, and beginning Italian. Classes meet one night per week for 11 weeks.

On September 5 the WTC held a luncheon program in the Plimsoll Club for 50 participants on “**Doing Business Through the Inter-American Development Bank: New Business Opportunities with Latin America and the Caribbean**” featuring **Isabel Hagbrink**, Office of External Relations IDB; and **Gene R. Harris**, Director, U.S. Commercial Liaison Office, IDB.

On September 12 the WTC and the U.S. Department of Commerce sponsored luncheon program in the Plimsoll Club for 40 participants on “**Doing Business with Ukraine, Southern Russia, and Moldova**” featuring **Michael Considine**, Country Officer for Ukraine and Moldova, Department of Commerce/BISNIS; **Andriy Vorobyov**, Representative for Ukraine, Department of Commerce/BISNIS Kiev, Ukraine; and **Marina Nechaeva** Representative for the Samara Region of Southern Russia, Department of Commerce/BISNIS Samara, Russia

On September 24 the WTC and other organizations sponsored a luncheon program in the Plimsoll Club for 58 participants on “**Doing Business in Mexico**” featuring **Hon. Eduardo Ibarolla**, Consul General of Mexico in Houston; **Jose Rivas**, Trade Commissioner of Mexico in Miami; **Larry Collins**, Director of International Services with Louisiana Economic Development and a Board Member of the Gulf of Mexico States Accord; and **Gerard (Jay) Van Heuven**, a New Orleans native who is a Principal of the North American Trade and Investment Group.

On October 3 the WTC, the Honorary Consulate of Austria, and other organizations sponsored a luncheon briefing for 52 participants on “**Doing Business in Austria**” by **Heinz Seitinger, Advisor for North America, Austrian Business Agency in Vienna**.

On October 8 the WTC and other organizations sponsored a luncheon briefing in the Plimsoll Club for 34 participants on “**Corporate and Personal Security in the Global Environment**” conducted by **Juan Valadez**, Security Consultant and retired senior U.S. intelligence officer specializing in international security and counterterrorism.

On October 10 the WTC and other organizations sponsored a luncheon seminar for 23 participants on **“Selling Abroad Through Agents and Distributors”** featuring **Glenn Stoudt**, President of the International Division of Rochester Midland Corporation.

On October 17 the WTC and other organizations sponsored a luncheon seminar for 58 participants on **“The Outlook for CAFTA: Developing the Caribbean Basin through Trade & Investment”** featuring **Federico Sacasa**, Executive Director of Caribbean Latin American Action. CLAA is a well-known non-profit organization based in Washington, D.C. whose mission is centered on promoting democracy and private sector-led economic development in Caribbean Basin (CBI) beneficiary countries.

On October 28 the WTC, the Honorary Consulate of the Netherlands, and other organizations sponsored a luncheon briefing for 30 participants on **“EU Enlargement in 2004 - Holland Gateway”** featuring **Edgar Kasteel**, Vice President, Holland International Distribution Council; **Michael van der Woude**, Area Director, Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency; and **Larry Weischwill**, Senior Vice President of European Operations for Transoceanic Shipping Company.

On October 31 the WTC, the New Orleans U.S. Export Assistance Center, and other organizations sponsored a luncheon seminar for 55 participants on **“Worldwide Opportunities for the Oil & Gas Industry: Canada, Colombia, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Nigeria, Eastern Russia-Sakhalin Island, Venezuela, and UAE”** featuring eight U.S. Commercial Officers in these petroleum-producing countries.

On November 3 the WTC, Louisiana Economic Development, and other organizations sponsored a breakfast briefing for 29 participants in the WTC’s 29th floor Board Room on **“Doing Business with Greater China (China, Hong Kong & Taiwan)”** featuring **Steve Lee**, Director, State of Louisiana Office, Taipei, Taiwan.

On November 6 the WTC, New Orleans U.S. Export Assistance Center, New Orleans South African Connection (NOSACONN), International Arts Foundation, and South African Airways sponsored an all-day forum for 82 participants at the WTC on **“Doing Business with South Africa.”** The Forum included panel discussions on business opportunities and commercial trends in South Africa and a jazz lunch with South African wines. Among the featured speakers at the Forum were: **Hon. Ray Nagin**, Mayor of New Orleans; **Mudunwazi Baloyi**, Economic Minister of the Embassy of South Africa in Washington; **Will Center**, Commercial Consul of the U.S. Embassy in South Africa; **Dr. Michael Sutcliffe**, City Manager, City of Durban, South Africa; and Damon J. Batiste, New Orleans South African Connection.

On November 11 the WTC and the New Orleans U.S. Export Assistance Center held an evening reception for 45 participants in the WTC’s 29th floor foyer for a **high level 15-member delegation representing the Shikoku Economic Federation**, a region in Japan.

The delegates included CEOs of several major Japanese owned companies who were visiting New Orleans as part of a four-city tour of the U.S. to complete research on infrastructure improvement, urban development, and tourism promotion.

On November 18 the WTC and other organizations sponsored a luncheon program for 43 participants on “**Blaine Kern's Expanding World: Taking Mardi Gras Abroad**” featuring **Blaine Kern** (“Mr. Mardi Gras”), Chairman of Kern Studios. Mr. Kern discussed his design and construction business for the entertainment industry in other countries and his on-going importation of Mardi Gras decorations and throws

On November 21 Louisiana Economic Development, the City of New Orleans, MetroVision, the Port of New Orleans, the New Orleans Aviation Board, and the WTC co-hosted the **Annual Dinner Dance Honoring the Consular Corps** for 151 participants in the WTC’s Plimsoll Club. The event serves to recognize the Consuls for their efforts to promote expanded relations between Louisiana and their countries. That afternoon the Consuls attended an economic development briefing on Louisiana coordinated by MetroVision held in the WTC’s 29th floor Board Room.

On December 4 the WTC, the Louisiana Technology Council, and other organizations sponsored a luncheon program in the Plimsoll Club for 47 attendees featuring **Colonel Frank R. Gunter** speaking on “**China 2020: Political Implications for Economic Growth.**” Colonel Gunter is a U.S. Marine Reserve Officer who was mobilized after 9/11; in his civilian career he is an Associate Professor of Economics at Lehigh University.

On December 5 the WTC, New Orleans Export Assistance Center and other organizations sponsored a half-day seminar in the WTC’s 18th floor Conference Room for 22 participants on “**How to Properly Complete the NAFTA Certificate of Origin**” conducted by **Louisa Elder**, Director of the State of Illinois’ NAFTA Opportunity Center.

On December 5 the WTC, the Consulate of Greece, and other organizations sponsored a luncheon program in the Plimsoll Club for 90 participants on the “**Athens 2004 Olympic Games**” featuring four Greek Olympic medalists and a briefing on “**U.S.-Greece Trade Relations.**” **Mr. Panagiotis Dermentzoglou** of the Embassy of Greece in Washington, D.C. conducted the briefing.

On December 11 the WTC co-sponsored a luncheon program held at MetroVision for a **42-member delegation from Shaanxi province** featuring: Hon. Gong Deshun, Vice Governor of Shaanxi province; Mr. Liu Ajin, Deputy President, China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) Shaanxi Sub-Council; and Hon. Wang Dengji, Mayor of Yulin.

On December 12 the WTC, the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), the Consulate of Japan, and other organizations sponsored an expanded luncheon forum for 37 participants in the Plimsoll Club on “**Japan: New Opportunities for Louisiana Businesses**” featuring three

JETRO officials: **Shinichi “Sam” Toyomoto**, JETRO Senior Trade Advisor, Arkansas Department of Economic Development; **Hideo “Henry” Onishi**, Office of the Governor, Austin, Texas; and **Setsuko Tokita**, JETRO Executive Director, Houston. The luncheon also featured two representatives of Louisiana companies doing business in Japan: **Deanne Raymond**, Tax Manager for Laitram Corporation in Harahan, and **James R. Dartez**, President of Royce Technologies in New Orleans.