



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**July 28, 2011**

**Media Contact:** Christine Rambo, V.P.  
Communications & Corporate Affairs  
(Office) 318.677.2531  
Email: [crambo@nlep.org](mailto:crambo@nlep.org)

## **North Louisiana Celebrates Economic Triumphs** *Ronpak and Music Mountain Water Announce Significant Projects.*

**(SHREVEPORT–BOSSIER, La.)** North Louisiana celebrates two major economic development events this week. Ronpak announced today (July 28, 2011) the location of a new multi-million dollar plant at the Port of Shreveport-Bossier. Music Mountain Water announced Monday, July 25, 2011 the expansion of its Shreveport manufacturing facilities. Governor Bobby Jindal joined Ronpak and Music Mountain Water executives, local elected officials, community leaders and the North Louisiana Economic Partnership (NLEP) at both announcements to celebrate these economic development triumphs, which have a combined economic impact of 200 new jobs, 70 retained jobs and more than \$26 million in capital investments.

Ronpak, a leading manufacturer of custom printed paper bags, packages and food wraps will invest a total of \$16.8 million in its new manufacturing facilities at The Port of Shreveport-Bossier. Once opened, the facility will create 175 new direct jobs with a payroll of \$50 million over 10 years. The manufacturing facility will also produce 500 new indirect jobs.

"I knew that after interviewing companies in the Shreveport-Bossier area, there existed a strong and vibrant workforce, a dedicated infrastructure at the Port, and a state of the art training system with LED FastStart. NLEP was key to the local company interviews as well as helping our employees feel welcomed and part of Shreveport-Bossier community," said Ron Sedley, Ronpak Founder and President.

"Indeed, this is a significant addition not only to the Port of Shreveport-Bossier but to our entire community," Shreveport Mayor Cedric Glover said. "Ronpak is an outstanding company, and we welcome the new jobs, products and multimillion-dollar investment they're bringing to our region."

Teamwork by state, regional and local partners was critical to this project's successful outcome. Different partners took a lead role during different phases of the project. NLEP and its partners, SWEPCO, Entergy and Louisiana Economic Development (LED), first met with Ronpak executives to interest them in locating their plant in North Louisiana. The Port of Shreveport-Bossier and LED then led the effort to close the deal with Ronpak.

"We won the project from Texas. Originally the company was planning to locate its new facility in Dallas to serve its clients in the South. But after we toured Ronpak officials through North Louisiana and set up interviews between Ronpak and existing employers, the company was sold on the competitive advantages of locating in our region," said Tim Miles, NLEP Vice President of Business Development.

"This project is a testament to how collaboration can move a region forward. The partnership between the Port Commission, Governor Bobby Jindal, the LED team, NLEP and others made this project come together," said Kurt Foreman, NLEP President. "We are honored to have been part of the team to bring Ronpak to North Louisiana and look forward to having this impressive company become part of our community."

Collaboration between state, regional and local partners also helped move the Music Mountain Water expansion forward. The company will invest \$9.3 million in a 200,000-square-foot injection molding facility in Shreveport, creating 25 new jobs and retaining 70 existing jobs. The project will allow Music Mountain Water to create one-gallon water bottles right here in North Louisiana. Previously, Music Mountain Water had to outsource this process to an out-of-state facility.

"Not only does this allow us to continue to grow and provide new jobs for people all across the state, it helps us to better serve our current and future customers with the products necessary to keep their families and employees properly hydrated. Over the past 30 years, we have grown to be the only full-line bottled water company owned and based in Louisiana," said Marcus Wren, Music Mountain Water CEO.

Liz McCain, NLEP's Vice President of Business Development who manages NLEP's ongoing existing business outreach and support efforts, worked with Music Mountain Water for years and helped connect the company with additional resources.

"Thanks to an NLEP investor's referral and our long-standing relationship with Music Mountain Water, we became aware of the company's growth needs and were able to support the expansion. Music Mountain Water purchased the old Coca Cola facility on Stoner Avenue and will reorganize its operations to include the new plastic injection molding process," said McCain.

"We are very pleased our assistance helped Music Mountain Water reinvest in the community and bring new jobs and incremental capital investment back to Shreveport's urban core," said John Peak, NLEP volunteer Board Chair.

**NLEP is a non-profit economic development marketing organization**, promoting 14 parishes in North Louisiana as a desirable and profitable business location. The NLEP and its many partners work with both existing companies and prospective employers to encourage incremental capital investment and job creation as a way to build a strong and thriving economy.

###