



LOUISIANA POSITIVES

Economic Development

- New Orleans ranks 19th among U.S. ports for container cargo imports in 2016, according to the Descartes-Datamyne annual U.S. Ports Report. The top products, in terms of value, were re-exports, or goods exported and then re-imported. Re-exports' value increased 7.1 percent to \$6.3 billion. Processors and controllers increased 79.5 percent to \$3.2 billion (The Advocate, June 2017).
- *Site Selection* magazine ranked Louisiana No. 10 in the nation for its economic development efforts. The publication cited the state's record of new and expanded facilities, high capital investment and substantial job creation. Since 2012, Louisiana has attracted more than \$125 billion in active capital investment projects, with \$65 billion of that investment now under construction or in the engineering and permitting phases (The Advocate, May 2017).
- Baton Rouge ranked second overall in *Site Selection* magazine's rankings of cities with populations between 200,000 to 1 million. The list counted the number of significant corporate projects, which is defined as new facilities and expansion that involve a capital investment of at least \$1 million, create 20 or more jobs or add more than 20,000 square feet of new floor area. There were 48 projects that met those criteria in Baton Rouge during 2016.
- Associated Builders and Contractors ranked Louisiana's construction business climate as the best in the nation. The study applauded Louisiana policymakers for writing themselves out of the picture and allowing market demands to determine who gets what construction jobs. The study also rewarded the state for its ban on project labor agreements and for job-promoting programs (American Press, December 2016).
- According to a study by the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, a science and technology think tank, the congressional district containing most of Baton Rouge ranked No. 23 nationally in high-tech manufacturing exports and the New Orleans district ranked No. 29. The foundation looked at 20 indicators of the innovation-driven, high-tech economy in its report. The research showed a nation in which the drivers of high-tech innovation are widely diffused (The Advocate, December 2016).
- Louisiana ranks No. 6 in Kiplinger's 10 Most Tax-Friendly States. The rankings compare a range of taxes in each state, including income tax, sales tax and gas tax (Kiplinger.com, November 2016).

- Louisiana ranks No. 5 in the U.S. in *Area Development* magazine's list of 2016 Top States for Doing Business, which surveys leading site-selection consultants on which U.S. states are the most attractive for business investment. The state ranked No. 2 for its incentive programs; No. 2 for its workforce development programs; No. 3 for state government cooperation; and No. 5 for favorable regulatory environment (*Area Development Magazine*, September 2016).
- *Business Facilities* magazine ranked Louisiana as No. 9 for exports leaders; No. 3 for high-wage manufacturing leaders; No. 3 for best infrastructure; and No. 6 for lowest industrial electricity rates (*Business Facilities*, August 2016).
- *Business Facilities* magazine named Louisiana FastStart the No. 1 workforce program in the country, noting its impressive diversity and coordination of economic development efforts across the state. Louisiana FastStart provides customized recruitment, screening and training to companies expanding in or relocating to Louisiana at no cost (*Business Facilities*, August 2016).
- Louisiana leads all U.S. states in the value of industrial construction projects during 2015 and ranks third overall for all commercial construction, according to a study released by the NAIOP Research Foundation (NAIOP.org, July 2016).
- In the U.S. Chamber Foundation's Enterprising States 2015 ranking, Louisiana ranks within the top 10 in numerous areas. The state ranks No. 1 in export intensity, No. 2 in export growth, and No. 3 for per capita income growth (US Chamber Foundation, June 2016).
- *Southern Business and Development* awarded Louisiana with an honorable mention in its State of the Year competition. The magazine gives credit to petrochemical sector in the state and its projects in Baton Rouge, New Orleans and the Lake Charles region for the state's high ranking. Additionally, the magazine ranks Baton Rouge and New Orleans as 2015 Major Market honorable mentions and Lake Charles as its 2015 Small Market of the Year. (*The Advocate*, Spring 2016).

Education

- The G.W. Carver Primary School in Ascension Parish has been named the 2017 national winner of the top award bestowed annually by the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (*The Advocate*, March 2017).
- Louisiana's graduation rate from public high schools reached all time high in 2015, at 77.5 percent. This represents an increase of 2.9 percent (*The Advocate*, May 2016).
- A new study by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers ranked Louisiana 10th in the nation when it comes to state policies that promote a strong charter school sector (*The American Press*, December 2015).
- Louisiana is tops in ACT score growth among states testing all students. The state had a .2 point composite score gain from 2014 to 2015, which beat that of 13 states across the nation (NOLA.com, August 2015).

Higher Education

- LSU ranks No. 94 among the Top 100 Worldwide Universities Granted U.S. Utility Patents in 2016, according to the National Academy of Inventors and Intellectual Property Owners Association. The list has been published each year since 2013 and this is LSU's first appearance as LSU researchers were granted 26 utility patents in 2016. The ranking highlights the role patents play in university research and innovation (The Advocate, June 2017).
- Louisiana Tech University's School of Design was recognized by the American Institute of Architects for its design work with MedCamps of Louisiana. Two projects – Hero's Launch and the Larkin Gibbs Memorial Pavilion – were celebrated for excellence in design from AIA's Gulf States Region Honor Awards program (The News Star, May 2017).
- Metairie resident and LSU senior business finance Major Alexandra De Gravelle was one of 12 students from around the country chosen as a recipient of the 2016 TD Ameritrade Institutional Nextgen Financial Planning scholarship. As part of the scholarship, De Gravelle rang the Nasdaq closing bell on July 20, 2016 (NOLA.com, July 2016).
- Four students and one faculty advisor from Louisiana Tech University's Eco-Car team won first place in the "Best Overall Team" category at a new event called Hack-a-Truck," sponsored by Shell Oil company. The group's superhero-themed food truck claimed the honors of best overall team, most creative design, best story and best food honors at the event (The News Star, February 2017).
- The University of Louisiana Monroe's School of Construction Management was recently ranked no. 6 in the "50 Best Value Schools for Construction Management 2016" list by BestValueSchools.com. The methodology used by the polling agency focused on factors an average student looks for, such as affordability, high-quality curriculum, and opportunities for student involvement, as well as the program's accreditations, degree popularity, enrollment and graduate rate (The News Star, January 2017).
- LSU online programs were ranked nationally by U.S. News & World Report's 2017 Best Online Programs. The LSU Online MS in construction management is ranked 8th among public colleges and universities and 11th overall on the list of 65 ranked by the magazine. LSU Online Flores Masters Business Administration Program is tied for 38th among public colleges and universities and tied for 47th overall on its list of 239 ranked programs (The Advocate, January 2017).
- Four Louisiana institutions made Kiplinger's Best College Value list. Tulane University, Louisiana Tech, Louisiana State University and Centenary College were among the 300 overall best value institutions (The News Star, December 2016).
- Louisiana Tech University's Department of Professional Aviation was named one of five programs in the nation to receive Textron Aviation's Top Hawk 2017 award. The selection places Louisiana Tech among the national leaders in collegiate aviation (The News Star, November 2016).

- According to MONEY's 2016-2017 Best Colleges Report, several Louisiana colleges fit the bill for institutions that offer the best value and return on investment. Louisiana Tech, LSU, University of Louisiana-Lafayette, Tulane and Loyola all make the list, with Louisiana Tech leading the pack at its No. 235 position (The News Star, July 2016).
- *Forbes* recognized Tulane, LSU, Louisiana Tech, Loyola, Centenary, University of Louisiana Lafayette, University of New Orleans, and Southeastern among their top 650 universities. Tulane ranked the highest of the state schools at #134; LSU came in second at #171; and Louisiana Tech in third at #392. The list is based on student satisfaction, post-graduation success, academic success and student debt rates (The News Star, July 2016).
- A new report from the Lumina Foundation, a private foundation based in Indianapolis, ranks Louisiana as No.1 for the percentage of adults with a high-quality post-secondary certificate. The report, *A Stronger Nation 2016*, says that the high ranking is due to a change in policy to include certificates and a push for more credential opportunities and technical education (The Advertiser, May 2016).
- The University of Louisiana Monroe's online learning programs have been lauded across the country. The university's online master's degrees in Public Administration, Curriculum and Instruction, Psychology and Criminal Justice have all been named as some of the best, most-affordable online programs in the country by a variety of higher education websites including GradSchoolHub.com, TopEducationDegrees.org and CollegeSource.net. Additionally, the online degree program, eULM, is the 33rd most affordable online college for a bachelor's degree in the nation, according to College Choice rankings (The News Star, June 2016).
- A team of LSU accounting students won the 2016 Deloitte National Accounting Case Competition and a \$10,000 prize, beating five other finalists (The Advocate, April 2016).
- According to a new list of the 50 Most Underrated Colleges in America for 2015 released by Business Insider, Louisiana Tech University is the sixth most underrated college in the nation. The list ranks more than 1,000 colleges and universities based on their graduates' mid-career salaries (The News Star, November 2015).
- Louisiana Tech University's master's in engineering and technology management program has earned a spot in the top 20 of all engineering management programs in the nation, according to GraduateProgram.com's Fall 2015 rankings. The rankings are based on reviews and evaluations from students on a variety of topics including academic competitiveness, career support, financial aid and quality of network (The News Star, October 2015).
- Sowela Technical Community College ranked in the top 50 on a pair of lists highlighting prominent community and technical colleges across the nation for 2015. The first list, Community College Week's 2015 "Top 100 Associate Degree Producers" list, ranked Sowela number 33. Sowela ranked 62 on the publications' list of "One-Year Certificate Producers" (The American Press, October 2015).

Local/Cities

- North Louisiana, as well as several other small cities in Louisiana, leads the Southeast United States in competitive business rankings. According to KPMG's 2016 Competitive Alternatives report, Shreveport, Baton Rouge, and New Orleans all lead the nation in cost competitiveness (KPMG.com, May 2017).
- New Orleans hosted a record 10.45 million visitors in 2014. Travelers shelled out a record \$7.41 billion to stay in and explore the city (NOLA.com, March 2017).
- Baton Rouge is the 2nd most successful city in landing corporate investments along the Mississippi River according to *Site Selection's* ranking, the Big Muddy Cup, which ranks Mississippi River regions by the number of corporate facility project investments they have landed, according to their population (Site Selection, March 2017).
- The Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport served more than 11.1 million passengers in 2016, setting a new record. The record was mainly achieved because of a spike in cities served. In 2016 passengers could fly to direct to 58 cities compared to 48 in 2015 and the airport is adding more non-stop destinations in 2017 (The Advocate, February 2017).
- One Louisiana city tops *MovieMaker* magazine's 2017 list of best places to live as a filmmaker. New Orleans ranks No. 4 on the list (The Advocate, February 2017).
- Acadiana farmer Richard Fontenot was named the 2016 Rice Farmer of the Year by the USA Rice Federation and Rice Farming Magazine (USA TODAY Network, December 2016).
- *Travel and Leisure's* annual readers' poll lists New Orleans as the second-best city in the country and No. 7 in the world to visit. The survey asks readers to rank cities based on sights and landmarks, culture, cuisine, friendliness, shopping and overall value (The Advocate, July 2016).
- According to a new *Smartasset* ranking, New Orleans is the top U.S. City for creative professionals, from painters and musicians to choreographers and architects. According to the personal finance website, New Orleans is affordable and has a long history of playing muse to creative types (NOLA.com, July 2016).
- *Bassmaster* magazine has named Toledo Bend as the No. 1 bass fishing lake in the country for the second year in a row. The lake bested 230 other potential fisheries in the contest (Bassmaster, June 2016).
- According to a report from U.S. News and World Report, New Orleans ranks as the No. 4 best affordable travel destination in America. The report is based on hotel rankings; vacation rankings; things to do rankings; travel rewards programs and other factors (The Advocate, June 2016).

Government/Misc

- Louisiana received a top rating for its highway safety laws by Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety. Louisiana was one of only five states plus the District of Columbia to earn the highest

rating of green, because it has 9 out of 15 recommended traffic safety laws (WWL, February 2017).

- The Louisiana Office of Tourism was recognized for a fourth consecutive record-breaking year in tourism and named the 2016 State Tourism Office of the Year by the Southeast Tourism Society (The Daily Advertiser, September 2016).
- Louisiana attracted more than 29 million visitors in 2015, breaking the tourism record for the fourth year in a row. According to an annual tourism study by the University of New Orleans Hospitality Research Center, the tourism industry generated over \$11 billion in total visitor spending and \$843 million in state tax revenue (The Advocate, April 2016).
- Work-related injuries and illnesses among Louisiana’s private companies fell to their lowest level in 13 years and pushed Louisiana to the top of state rankings, according to figures from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. Louisiana ranked No. 1 among the 41 states that participated in the survey (The Advocate, November 2015).

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