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New Camp Minden tenant gets contract, seeks workers

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Jack Blalock (right), senior business development manager for Tiburon Associations, Inc., visits with state Sen. Barrow Peacock (left) and Sen. Robert Adley following a formal announcement Monday of a first-year \$14 million defense contract expected to create up to 350 jobs at the company's new Camp Minden location. / Vickie Welborn/The Times

Written by Vickie Welborn

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MINDEN — A small defense contractor that began preparations at Camp Minden four months ago for a much-anticipated military contract is expected to balloon from its current staff of four to 120 or so within a month.

In fact, Jack Blalock, senior business development manager for Tiburon Associates, Inc., said he needs 40 mechanics, welders and painters “immediately, yesterday; we’re hiring as we speak.” Eventually, the work force should grow to 350 over a three- to five-year time frame.

One of Tiburon’s four employees is Tom Takada, who heads its

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human resources office. Takada is working with the Louisiana Workforce Commission office in Minden to fill the jobs. All inquiries should go through the commission, Blalock said.

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Blalock shared his employment needs Monday after being joined by Gov. Bobby Jindal and a host of area legislators and parish governing officials from Bossier and Webster parishes in the formal announcement of Tiburon's contract. The Virginia-based

company was applauded for choosing Camp Minden for its base of operations even after a separate military contract fell through last year.

"We appreciate the confidence you had in us," Bossier Parish Police Jury President Jack Avery said in acknowledging the company's decision to stay and fight for a second contract.

And with that first-year \$14 million contract in hand, Tiburon is on the fast track after getting the green light. With its Texas-based partner, White's Paint Blast, Tiburon will overhaul and recondition combat tactical wheeled vehicles from the federal Red River Army Depot near Texarkana, Texas.

Preparations for the work load started in March when Tiburon began renovations to a 30,000 square-foot Y-line building on Camp Minden's expansive property. Blalock praised local and state officials who supported their efforts, after noting that other states scouted as potential locations lacked the necessary "skilled and willing workforce" and "training mechanisms."

"A lot of areas are indifferent to that but that's one of the things that sold us on Camp Minden," Blalock said.

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