

SKED PRESS RELEASE  
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### Longtime Economic Development Executive Selected New SKED Board Director

SOMERSET, Ky. – A well-known East Kentucky economic development director has been elected to serve on the Southeast Kentucky Economic Development Corporation (SKED) Board of Directors in 2013.

Rodney Hitch, manager of corporate economic development for East Kentucky Power Cooperative (EKPC), joined the SKED board in January.

Hitch's 21 years of experience in the community and economic development field groomed him to be a perfect fit for the SKED Board and its mission of job development in Southeast. In his previous positions as CEO of the Morehead/Rowan County Economic Development Council, Inc., I.D.A. and regional Menifee, Morgan and Rowan County Industrial Authority, Hitch was responsible for a number of key economic development projects in the region.

As director of the Morehead/Rowan County EDC, he spearheaded construction of the Rowan County's \$1.5 million airport road. This road paved the way for the development of the Morehead-Rowan Air Business Park near the National Guard Armory and new \$18 million dollar Morehead-Rowan County Clyde A. Thomas Regional Airport. The road project included an additional \$600,000 in new water and sewer lines to serve the airport and aviation park.

He was also instrumental in the recruitment, preservation and expansions of the Simba USA plant, Kentucky Family Dollar Distribution Center, SRG Global, Morehead Machining, Morehead Metals, recruitment of the Gateway ADD Complex and Heiners-Sara Lee distribution facility, extension of roads into and inside the business parks, millions of dollars in grants, a new \$1.3 million spec building project and attraction of several retail businesses to the Morehead area.

"In the past, I've been fortunate to work with wonderful groups of professionals dedicated to enhancing the region and commonwealth's quality of life. Teamwork and support is always required, and I now use many lessons learned in my new role at East KY Power," Hitch said. "It's certainly an honor to serve on the Southeast Kentucky Economic Development Board of Directors, and I look forward to learning an even higher level of economic development expertise from the impressive SKED staff and my fellow board members."

Hitch received his higher education at the University of Kentucky College of Business and Economics, Somerset Community and Technical College and Morehead State University.

He currently serves on the Kentucky Association of Economic Development (KAED) Board, Rowan County Recreation Board and is a member of the Tenco Workforce Board of Directors. In addition, he is a 2003 graduate of Leadership Kentucky and member of the following organizations: Kentucky

Association of Manufacturers, Kentucky United, Bluegrass Alliance, Southern Economic Development Council and the National Rural Economic Development Association.

Hitch and his wife, Belinda, a 20-year elementary teacher, now employed at Morehead State University, continue to live in the Morehead area. They have two sons. Jared, 25, is a graduate of Lindsey Wilson College and currently employed in the human resources department at SMX, Link Belt in Lexington, Ky. Trevor, 13, attends Lakeside Christian Academy. Hitch's parents, Alvin and Joyce Hitch, live in his hometown of Russell Springs, Ky.

SKED is proud to have Rodney as one of the newest members of the SKED Board of Directors," said SKED Executive Director Greg Jones. "It's people like Rodney, who have made a difference in the communities they serve, who have the most potential to make the important decisions that affect an entire region of the state. Rodney has been a valuable member of the Rowan County community, and is now a valuable member of the SKED board serving 45 counties in Southeast Kentucky."

Other members of the SKED Board of Directors include: Tim Barnes, Hometown Bank president and CEO; Shirley Gifford, Somerset CPA; Ben Sams, Windstream Communications account executive; Darryl McGaha, Lake Cumberland ADD workforce development director; Charlene Harris, president and CEO of First National Bank of Russell Springs; Michael Hayes, director of the Kentucky Highlands Empowerment Zone and special projects manager for Kentucky Highlands Investment Corp.;

Dr. Jo Marshall, president of Somerset Community College, Virginia Flanagan, special assistant to the President of Campbellsville University, Daryl Smith, economic development executive with Kentucky Utilities in Lexington; Corey Craig, president and CEO of Citizen's Bank of Mount Vernon and SAIC FEMA Program Manager David Blakeman.

SKED is a nonprofit economic development organization formed by Congressman Hal Rogers in 1986 to create jobs in a 45-county service area in Southern and Eastern Kentucky. In cooperation with other economic development groups and the state of Kentucky, SKED has assisted more than 100 companies to expand or establish new operations within the region. These businesses have created more than 10,000 jobs. For more information, visit [www.southeastkentucky.com](http://www.southeastkentucky.com).

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