

RE ★ DISCOVER  
**GREENEVILLE**  
T E N N E S S E E

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** September 6, 2007

**CONTACT:** Bob Cantler, General Manager  
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**MORGAN SQUARE DEVELOPMENT GROUP LAUNCH UNPRECEDENTED  
PROJECT TO TRANSFORM GREENEVILLE, TENNESSEE  
INTO A NEW FRONTIER FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING**

**Greeneville, TN:** A group of visionaries led by entrepreneur, community leader and philanthropist Scott M. Niswonger will launch its extraordinary plan to turn the town of Greeneville into a fresh, economically sustainable model for small-town America on September 6, 2007 at the historic General Morgan Inn located in downtown Greeneville.



The 4:40 pm press conference will provide the media with a detailed outline of the group's vision for Greeneville, including its comprehensive plan to transform this Northeast Tennessee town into a desirable community for a "new generation of 21st century pioneers."

Using Niswonger's proven economic model of "Learn, Earn and Return" as its fundamental philosophy, the group plans to build upon the vast contributions Niswonger has already made to the community.

"Small town America has experienced an emigration of its young talent for generations as the best and the brightest relocate to metropolitan areas," Niswonger says. "The Learn, Earn and Return model is a viable way to reverse that process and bring a new generation of technological pioneers back to the frontier."

Niswonger's first step was to establish the Niswonger Foundation with a \$25 million investment to create opportunities for community and individual growth through education. Focused on local schools facing economic challenges, the Foundation's Partnership Program provides the resources and expertise these schools need to become successful. In five years of operation, Greene County has become a national model for its reading programs, state-of-the-art technology centers and efficient modes of assessment.

In addition, the Foundation's Scholarship and Leadership Training Program has awarded college scholarships to 42 local high school seniors, while providing valuable leadership experience, including internships, training and workshops with such inspirational notables as seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong.

"I wanted to give our local young people opportunities to attend the best schools in the nation," Niswonger says. "In turn, we have a commitment from these young scholars to return to the First Congressional District in East Tennessee to give back to this community."

The second stage of Niswonger's model includes providing venture capital to help local and relocating entrepreneurs buy or create businesses in this region.

"If these kids come back to this region with degrees and good ideas we want to sit down and help them develop a successful business plan," Niswonger says. "We've set aside capital to help get these businesses off the ground and running. We want to fund their dreams until they're bankable on their own. Of course, these opportunities are also available to entrepreneurs who are already here or who are willing to relocate and create new businesses here."

Yet Niswonger recognizes that to lure young people away from the nation's metropolitan areas, a small town must provide a thriving, exciting place to live. As a result, he has already begun revitalizing Greeneville by constructing a performing arts center, a sports complex; renovating the luxurious General Morgan Inn and its surrounding historic downtown; and planning a wide range of new projects including new office space, residences, spa, restaurant, outdoor areas, movie theaters and other community oriented spaces.

"To be able to recruit high-level businesses and entrepreneurs, we have to improve quality of life and resources," Niswonger says. "We need planned housing developments for the young people. We need a rich social, cultural and economic community; a place that is globally connected to the international business world through technology while retaining all the benefits of small-town living; a place where anyone can safely raise a family while remaining at the cutting edge of the world's marketplace. We're looking for pioneers to return to the frontier."

According to Niswonger, these "pioneers" will not just include mobile entrepreneurs with knowledge-based business and new technologies, but baby boomers starting second careers, young people starting families, tourists looking for a perfect getaway, and retirees looking for a vibrant community with traditional values.

"Everywhere there's a guy like me who's done very well in business. People who want to give, but need provable, measurable results that you've made an improvement," Niswonger says. "Ultimately, I would like to see this become a national model."

Founded in 1783, Greeneville is Tennessee's second oldest town and rich in history. Home to frontiersman Davy Crockett and Andrew Johnson, the 17th President of the United States, Greeneville is unique for being the only town in the United States that pays tribute to both the Union and the Confederacy in its courthouse square.

Greeneville is also known as the gateway to the rolling Appalachian mountains of Northeast Tennessee. Home to four state parks which include both world-class whitewater rivers and serene mountain-fed creeks, full of rainbow, brown and brook trout, Northeast Tennessee boasts excellent mountain biking, hiking, climbing and camping.

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**SCOTT M. NISWONGER: BIO**

**Greeneville, TN:** Scott M. Niswonger has distinguished himself as a successful businessman, aviator, entrepreneur, community leader and philanthropist.

Born and raised in Van Wert, Ohio, Mr. Niswonger graduated in 1968 from Purdue University with a degree in Aviation Technology. He is a certified airline transport pilot and has flown everything from J-3 Cubs to the Boeing 747 aircraft. In addition to his degree in Aviation Technology, Mr. Niswonger holds a BSBA from Tusculum College, as well as a Doctorate of Technology from Purdue University (2004) and an honorary Doctorate of Human Letters from Tusculum College (2006).

Mr. Niswonger co-founded Landair Transport in 1981 with an initial \$2,000 investment. Today he is the majority shareholder of Landair Transport and serves as Chairman Emeritus of Forward Air Corporation, which has been recognized by Forbes magazine as one of the "Top 200 Small Companies" in America for the past nine consecutive years. The two companies have a combined market value of over one billion dollars.

Very active in community affairs, Mr. Niswonger is President of the Niswonger Foundation; Trustee at Tusculum College; President of the Governing Board for the Niswonger Performing Arts Center; Chairman of the Regional Economic Development Alliance; and a member of the President's Executive Council at Purdue University.

Mr. Niswonger has been honored with numerous recognitions. Some of those include being selected by Junior Achievement International as their worldwide recipient of the International Distinguished Graduate Award and Business Hall of Fame inductee; Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur of the Year for the Southeastern United States; Coopers & Lybrand's Entrepreneurial Company of the Year; awarded Purdue University's Distinguished Technology Alumni Award; Purdue University's Pinnacle Award; the Mountain States Hospital Foundation Spirit Award; and the State of Tennessee Board of Regents Award for Excellence in Philanthropy.

Mr. Niswonger is especially proud of The Niswonger Foundation that he established in 2001 with a \$25 million investment to create opportunities for individual and regional growth through educational programs, scholarships, and other charitable activities. This educational operating foundation currently has more than 40 scholars in universities across America.

With an exceptional level of giving and generosity, businessman and philanthropist Scott Niswonger has made a positive impact that will affect many generations to come.

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**“LEARN, EARN AND RETURN”:  
AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ENTERPRISE MODEL**

Greeneville, TN: Scott M. Niswonger was flying over the Midwest thinking about economics when he saw a geometric crop circle carved into the cornfields below. He'd been reading an article about the Hershey Foundation, which had been established in 1986 to build and run orphanages with profits from the legendary chocolate company. Niswonger was impressed to discover that the foundation was now worth billions of dollars but thought its purpose could have broader applications with such a large endowment.



“I began thinking about how a foundation of that magnitude could affect an entire community, all aspects of it. That’s when I looked down and saw this oddly-shaped geometric crop circle. Like that, the plan came to me — whole and complete,” Niswonger says. “I opened one of my yellow legal tablets and began sketching it out. By the time we’d landed, the Economic Development Enterprise Model was born.”

Niswonger’s three-part model can be summarized in three words: Learn, Earn and Return. It’s based on fairly simple ideas. Invest in your young people. Give them the tools they need to succeed anywhere in the country and world. And finally, convince them to come home and give back.



“Small town America has experienced a brain-drain for generations as the best and the brightest relocated to metropolitan areas,” Niswonger says. “The Learn, Earn and Return model is a viable way to reverse that process and bring a new generation of technological pioneers back to the frontier.”

Niswonger’s first step was to establish the Niswonger Foundation with \$25 million to create opportunities for community and individual growth through education. Focused on local schools facing economic challenges, the Foundation’s Partnership Program provides the resources and expertise these schools need to become successful. In five years of operation, Greene County has become a national model for its reading programs, state-of-the-art technology centers and efficient modes of assessment.

Additionally, the Foundation’s Scholarship and Leadership Training Program has awarded college scholarships to 42 local high school seniors, while providing valuable leadership experience, including internships, training and workshops with such inspirational notables as seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong.

“I wanted to give our local young people opportunities to attend the best schools in the nation,” Niswonger says. “In turn, we have a commitment from these young scholars to return to the First Congressional District of East Tennessee to give back to this community.”

The second stage of Niswonger's model includes providing venture capital to help local and relocating entrepreneurs buy or create businesses in this region.

"If these kids come back to this region with degrees and good ideas we want to sit down and help them develop a successful business plan," Niswonger says. "We've set aside capital to help get these businesses off the ground and running. We want to fund their dreams until they're bankable on their own. Of course, these opportunities are also available to entrepreneurs who are already here or who are willing to relocate and create new businesses here."

Yet Niswonger recognizes that to lure young people away from the nation's metropolitan areas, a small town must provide a thriving, exciting place to live. As a result, he has already begun revitalizing Greeneville by constructing a performing arts center, a sports complex and a 50,000-square-foot office building; renovating the luxurious General Morgan Inn and its surrounding historic downtown; and planning a wide range of new projects including new residences, spas, restaurants, outdoor areas, movie theaters and other spaces.

"To be able to recruit high-level businesses and entrepreneurs, we have to improve quality of life and resources," Niswonger says. "We need planned housing developments for the young people. We need a rich social, cultural and economic community; a place that is globally connected to the international business world through technology while retaining all the benefits of small-town living; a place where anyone can safely raise a family while remaining at the cutting edge of the world's marketplace. We're looking for pioneers to return to the frontier."

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**GREENVILLE, TENNESSEE: AN OVERVIEW**

**Greenville, TN:** Known as the gateway to the rolling Appalachian mountains of Northeast Tennessee, Greenville is steeped in rich American history and blessed with natural beauty and small-town charm.

Within striking distance of four state parks, world-class whitewater rivers and serene mountain-fed creeks full of rainbow, brown and brook trout, Northeast Tennessee boasts excellent mountain biking, hiking, climbing and camping. It's also only 70 miles from Knoxville, 35 miles from the Tri-Cities region of Johnson City/Kingsport/Bristol and 70 miles from Asheville, North Carolina.

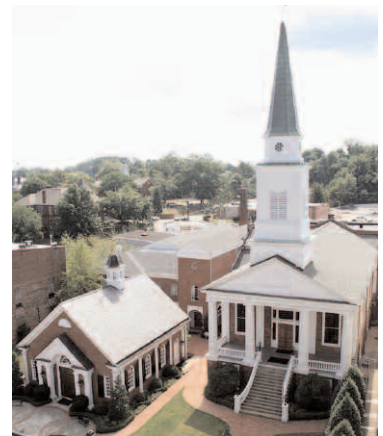
Early settlers followed Indians and animals to the Big Spring - a water source that eventually served the growing town of Greenville for 150 years. By the mid-1700's, early settlers of the region were gathering at this large spring, listening to the Reverend Samuel Doak preach under the bows of a willow tree. In 1783, this meeting place became the town of Greenville.

Three years later, legendary frontiersman Davy Crockett was born on the banks of the romantic Nolichucky River near the mouth of Limestone Creek. He later died in Texas, defending the Alamo during the war for Texas' independence from Mexico.

By 1826, when an illiterate tailor's apprentice named Andrew Johnson arrived in town, Greenville was a flourishing community. Self-educated, this young man rose through every political office, from Greenville alderman to 17th President of the United States. His home, tailor shop and burial place, as well as a visitor center, are open to the public and maintained as a National Historic Site by the U.S. Park Service.

During the Civil War, Greenville changed hands several times. Although the state voted to secede, East Tennessee was an island of unionist sentiment. On the lawn of the Greene County Courthouse are two monuments that commemorate the Civil War. One is dedicated to local troops who served in the Grand Army of the Republic (Union), and another memorializes General Morgan, known as the "Thunderbolt of the Confederacy." Greenville is thought to be the only town in the United States that pays tribute to both the Union and the Confederacy in its courthouse square. Morgan, incidentally, was killed during a surprise attack by Federal troops in 1864. Legend has it that the General Morgan Inn was built where his body fell.

Today, Greenville is a town with one foot firmly rooted in its proud history and one poised for great change and remarkable growth. Greenville's Tusculum College is the oldest Presbyterian-affiliated institution of higher



learning in the United States. Founded in 1794, this proud school was recently awarded Division I-A status and boasts both a state-of-the-art sports complex and baseball stadium where the Houston Astros' rookies play summer league.

Greeneville's climate consists of four very distinct, very mild seasons, which allow residents and visitors to take advantage of the limitless outdoor recreational opportunities available. The average annual temperature is 55 degrees with 9 inches of snowfall annually, and an average of 42 inches of rainfall.

In two separate publications in the mid 90's, Greeneville was chosen the #1 small town in Tennessee by Norman Crampton, author of *The 100 Best Small Towns in America*, a nationwide guide to the best in small town living. Greeneville was also one of four towns in Tennessee and one of 200 towns and villages in the United States listed in *America's Most Charming Towns and Villages*.

Health care is excellent. In 1999-2000 more than 85% of Greene County residents requiring inpatient hospital services chose to stay in Greene County hospitals. Laughlin Memorial Hospital has provided medical assistance to the community since 1939. A state-of-the-art \$38 million hospital building opened in 1995 with 140 Hospital beds. Takoma Adventist Hospital is a 115-bed facility which has offered health care in a Christian atmosphere for more than 70 years. Both local hospitals are fully accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals.

More than 75 doctors currently practice in Greene County, specializing in a variety of fields, while more than 20 dentists in the area serve Greeneville and surrounding communities. In addition, a Veteran's Administration hospital and Johnson City Medical Center are located thirty miles away in Johnson City. The University of Tennessee Medical Center in Knoxville is 70 miles away.

Crime Rates are minimal. Reportable offenses averaged 60% below national crime figures. That amounts to 15 offenses per 1,000 residents, compared to a national average of 58 per 1,000 residents. The incidence of violent crime is even lower.

Greeneville also has the second highest performing city government in Tennessee, and is in the top 10% in the nation. Rated on schools, police, fire, streets and parks, the city scored 66 (the national average is 46).

Greene County is proud of its diverse economic base and low per capita debt (less than \$100 per capita). Moody's Municipal Credit Report gives Greene County a Grade A rating which puts it in the top 25% of counties in Tennessee. All of Greene County's current debt will be paid within ten years.

In 2000, the average price of a single-family, three- or four-bedroom home in Greene County was \$97,362. A five-bedroom home averaged \$218,807. The average price for a condominium was \$102,458. Monthly rental on a two-bedroom apartment averaged \$375.

Today, Greeneville is poised to become a sustainable model for small-town America and a desirable community for a "new generation of 21st century pioneers."

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**REDISCOVER GREENEVILLE: A COMMUNITY VISION**

**Greeneville, TN:** Rediscover Greeneville's vision is a new model of economic sustainability for small-town America, but it begins with a specific plan for the community of Greeneville. Last April, Scott Niswonger and his associates invited architects and planners from around the region for a three-day design charette and came up with a host of ideas for Greeneville's historic downtown district.

The following projects are the next steps in the process, yet nothing is cast in stone. This is simply the beginning of a community dialogue that will determine the best uses for these properties and create a vision for what the downtown can be.

In addition to adding 28 new rooms and increased parking, the General Morgan Inn will also receive improvements such as expanded open-air event areas on the terrace and in the gardens located behind the hotel. There are also plans to bring in a luxury day spa and create a lawn and amphitheater for community events within view of the historic Dixon-Williams house.

The future of Greeneville rests in the vast potential of quaint and picturesque Depot Street. Plans include over 60,000 square feet of new retail, restaurants, and services along with 30 new loft apartments above these spaces. Potential highlights include Scotty's Music Hall, a historic bar and music hall located in the old opera house.

The Niswonger Center, an office complex featuring 50,000 square feet of office space, will be built on Main Street. As the economic heart of Rediscover Greeneville's vision, it will house the Niswonger Foundation, offices for enterprise development and other new businesses.

The Learning Center, a state-of-the-art library and education center is proposed on the Walters State Community College campus near the recently completed Niswonger Performing Art Center. Available to both students and the public, this education and technology resource will help all of Greeneville achieve its full academic potential.



Early settlers in the region would gather at the Big Spring, a bucolic spot located at the convergence of two Indian trails, to listen to the Reverend Samuel Doak preach under the bows of a willow tree. In 1782, this meeting place became origin of the town of Greeneville. The current green space surrounding this natural and historic landmark is proposed to be enhanced behind the existing library to create more natural space in the downtown area.

In order to accommodate both businesses and visitors, a WiFi Mesh has been proposed, which would make the entire downtown a free Internet “hotspot.”

To accommodate a new generation of Greeneville pioneers, a significant housing rehabilitation program will be undertaken in the neighborhoods within walking distance of downtown, while additional mixed-use infill development will be created in the downtown core. In addition, enhanced streetscapes and parking opportunities have also been proposed for the downtown area.

“Ultimately, Rediscover Greeneville is a community redevelopment program,” says Rediscover Greeneville consultant Chuck Tessier. “This vision is seen as a starting point for the community to get involved in the process. It will require the participation of city, county, and state officials. We need the public, especially business owners and property owners, to help make this vision a reality.”

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