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Abita Brewing Co. honored by governor

Gov. Bobby Jindal has honored Abita Brewing Co., one of the fastest growing independent brewers in the nation, for its economic development in south Louisiana.

The Abita Springs-based company was one of seven statewide companies to receive the Lantern Award during a recent ceremony at the governor's mansion in Baton Rouge.

The Lantern Awards are presented to businesses that, for

three years, have expanded facilities, increased number of employees and contributed to the Louisiana community where it operates.

Fueled by a routine double-digit increase in sales during the past several years, Abita recently built a new brew house to increase its production by 300 percent, David Blossman, CEO and president, has said.

Abita Brewing Co. is the first ever St. Tammany company to

receive the award. The St. Tammany Parish Economic Development Foundation nominated the company for the honor.

"We're very proud of Abita Brewing for being selected to receive this award," said STEDF Executive Director Brenda Reine-Bertus. "But our pride in this company is based not just on this honor but on its ongoing efforts to better the economic opportunities in St. Tammany and to enhance the

community through good corporate citizenship."

Copper lanterns, made by New Orleans-based Bevolo Gas and Electric Lights, which pioneered and made famous the French Quarter-style lantern, will serve as the trophy awards.

The following are the 2008 winners:

Region 1 - Abita Brewing Co., LLC, Abita Springs.

Region 2 - Placid Refining Co. LLC, Port Allen.

Region 3 - Marathon Petroleum Co., Garyville Refinery, Garyville, La.

Region 4 - Ideal Steel, LLC, Broussard.

Region 5 - R & H Quality Refractory Services, Inc., Westlake.

Region 6 - Pearson Manufacturing, LLC, Pineville.

Region 7 - Franke Consumer Products, Inc., Ruston.

Region 8 - International Paper/Louisiana Mill, Bastrop.