

International Relationships Help Us Soar Nicholasville Mayor Russ Meyer



Dr. Abdul Kalam, the former president of India, shared his wisdom and philosophy of life with several hundred Jessamine County students and educators last week [April 14, 2007] during an extraordinary visit to our community. Even as they were attentive and polite to our distinguished guest, I could not help but think that most of them would not fully grasp the potential impact of this visit on our community.

Most would not realize that where world leaders go, economic development opportunities follow. It's something most people don't think about on a day-to-day basis.

We were pleased to hear the inspirational message of this leader, who, for five years was the president of the world's second largest nation. With 1.5 billion people, it's a wonder he would spend his morning in a community of about 40,000. Yet, there he was, personally sharing his beautiful analogy of education giving us wings.

But more importantly, he soon will share his impressions of Nicholasville/Jessamine County with countless others as he travels the world and returns to his native India. He will talk of our welcoming nature, our well educated workforce, and the many opportunities for business that we are creating.

I'm sure he will tell many people about the successful businesses we already have here, particularly Altech, one of our many corporate jewels. During his tour, Dr. Kalam praised Alltech's facilities and the international business they have developed from their Nicholasville headquarters.

There is nothing as effective in economic development as building relationships. We started with a visit to India to learn what opportunities might exist. We were rewarded with a new perspective on that part of the world and contacts that will lead to mutually rewarding business prospects.

Thanks to the many people who work every day to make our community great, we have an impressive story to tell. We have local access to the best in academics, a comfortable lifestyle, and a values system that puts stock in hard work.

Dr. Kalam's message was very much on target: Education does give us wings. And I'd like to add that international relationships will help Nicholasville soar.