

money

CORPORATE TAX RATE

Some business leaders fear revamping tax code is not on the president's agenda **Story, D-4**



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City No. 1 place for startups

Site dubs Jacksonville best in country to launch business

By Roger Bull
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Jacksonville has topped yet another good list to be on. WalletHub.com, a personal finance social network, has ranked Jacksonville as the best place in the country to start a business.

WalletHub ranked the 150 largest cities in the United States on a variety

of issues. Jacksonville came out on top, it said, because of the area's strong record of successful young companies, low corporate tax rates, employee availability and accessible financing.

The area had the second-highest five-year success rate for businesses in the country, it found.

"Jacksonville's high ranking as an entrepreneurial

destination mirrors expectations for strong growth throughout the city's economy in 2014, buoyed by hiring in the construction and professional services industries as well as a burgeoning start-up community," the report said.

Elton Rivas has been watching new businesses

BEST continues on **D-3**

THE TOP 10

1. Jacksonville
2. Fayetteville, N.C.
3. Augusta, Ga.
4. Jackson, Miss.
5. Memphis
6. New Orleans
7. Tulsa, Okla.
8. Columbus, Ga.
9. Cape Coral
10. Las Vegas

THE BOTTOM 10

141. Ontario, Calif.
142. Jersey City, N.J.
143. Santa Clara, Calif.
144. Anaheim, Calif.
145. Seattle
146. Santa Ana, Calif.
147. Garden Grove, Calif.
148. Glendale, Calif.
149. Providence, R.I.
150. Newark, N.J.

Companies spend big on stock buybacks

They exaggerate health

Working on the First Coast



Think twice before you decide on that tattoo

I recently spoke to a group of Jacksonville University students who were preparing for the college campus recruiting season. They asked thoughtful questions about employer perceptions, including "How do employers feel about body art in the workplace?"

According to surveys, 14 percent of Americans have tattoos. It's not surprising that body art varies among the generations; 15 percent of Baby Boomers have tattoos, while 32 percent of Gen X and 38 percent of Millennials have body art, according to a 2010 Pew Research Center study. Celebrities like Angelina Jolie and professional athletes helped push body art into the mainstream and reduce its association with gangs and criminals, making it

ember, a sign that hiring may remain steady in coming months.

The Labor Department said Tuesday that employers posted 3.9 million job openings, up 1.5 percent from December. That is still below November's nearly six-year high of 4.1 million, the first month that openings topped 4 million since March 2008.

There are about 2.6 unemployed Americans, on average, for each open job, the report shows. That's close to the ratio of 2 to 1 that is typical of healthier economies.

Associated Press

Cars.com drawing potential buyers

Cox Enterprises Inc., the media holding company, and London-based buyout firm Apax Partners, are interested in bidding for auto-sales website Cars.com, people with knowledge of the matter said.

The group of newspaper publishers that's working with Moelis & Co. to explore a sale of Cars.com hasn't formally solicited bids for the business yet, said the people, asking not to be identified because the information is private. The site, visited by more than 11 million potential car buyers a month, may fetch \$2.5 billion in a sale, one of the people said.

Cars.com, which was started in 1998, lets user check prices, compare models and read reviews of auto dealers.

Bloomberg News

committee is investigating the way General Motors and a federal safety agency handled a deadly ignition switch problem in compact cars.

House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton of Michigan says the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration received a large number of complaints about the problem during the past decade. But GM didn't recall the 1.6 million cars until last month.

Ignition switches on older-model Chevrolet Cobalts and five other GM models can shift from the "run" position to "accessory"

been linked to the problem.

Upton says the committee will seek information from the automaker and hold a hearing in the coming weeks.

Congress passed legislation in 2000 requiring automakers to report safety problems quickly to NHTSA. The laws came after an investigation into a series of Ford-Firestone tire problems.

Upton said in a statement that the committee wants to know if GM or the agency missed something that could have flagged the problems sooner.

An Associated Press re-

BEST

Continued from D-1

get going in Jacksonville as the co-founder of both One Spark and KYN, which was formed last year to help businesses identified at the festival.

"While I'm not intimately knowledgeable about the ranking system that was used for this, I can say that Jacksonville's median demographics allow for a great market to start projects, businesses and new ventures," Rivas said. "It seems that this is yet another further notch in the belt showcasing the emergence of Jacksonville's startup scene."

If nothing, Rivas acknowledged any attention the ranking produces would have to be positive.

"Publicity, good or bad, is generally rooted in some sense of truthfulness. I would say the same for this," he said. "Ranking systems can always be debated, sure. Nonetheless,

this is a positive notch in perception that helps further the reality of Jacksonville being a great place to launch."

Jerry Mallot, president of JAXUSA Partnership, said the ranking is good, but real success is more important.

"As the study mentioned, Jacksonville stands out as a place to start a business for a variety of reasons, including the country's second-highest 5-year small business survival rate, a skilled workforce and fairly accessible small business funding. There is evidence of this in the success of companies like Web.com, that is consistently recognized as one of the fastest-growing technology companies in North America," Mallot said.

"Ultimately we are judged more by the strength of our local economy than rankings such as this, but these types of recognition are encouraging and are often indicators of real progress."

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