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Canton plant growing by 1,000 new jobs

Nissan investing \$20 million to bring new vehicles to Mississippi

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Nissan will add 1,000 new jobs at the Canton plant as it begins building the Frontier, Xterra and Sentra. / Barbara Gauntt/The Clarion-Ledger

Written by Jeff Ayres

three new vehicle brands there.

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Nissan officials announced Thursday that 1,000 jobs will be created as production starts on the next-generation Sentra compact sedan in December and the Frontier pickup and Xterra SUV in November.

"We build something special here in Canton," said Dan Bednarzyk, who oversees manufacturing at the plant. "Today, we're here to talk about the next chapter of our history."

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Roughly 400 people have been hired so far, with the remaining 600 slated to be on the job by December, he said. The additions will bring the plant's total workforce to 4,500.

The infusion of jobs also should greatly benefit Madison County, which had the second-lowest unemployment rate in May among the

state's 82 counties, 6.2 percent, trailing only Rankin County, according to the Mississippi Department of Employment Security.

The new jobs also mean more spending power and home construction will come to

Madison County in the next couple of years, said Tim Coursey, executive director of the Madison County Economic Development Authority.

"One-thousand jobs - that's the equivalent of a (new) manufacturing plant by itself," he said.

Stephanie Sutton has worked at Nissan since it opened in 2003.

She says the company gave her the chance to build a meaningful career and chart a better future for herself and her family. She hopes the new jobs do the same for others.

"They're going to make, (for) some other struggling mothers, a world of difference," she said.

The Sentra currently is not built in the U.S. Sentras sold domestically are built at a Nissan plant in Mexico.

Production of the Frontier and Xterra is moving from Nissan's assembly plant in Smyrna, Tenn., to make room at that plant for the first domestic production of the automaker's Leaf electric car.

The Canton plant began building the next-generation of the Altima midsize sedan, Nissan's top-selling vehicle, this month.

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Nissan Jobs

For more information about jobs at Nissan's Canton plant, call 1-888-277-5157 or visit <http://kellynissan.appone.com>.

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