

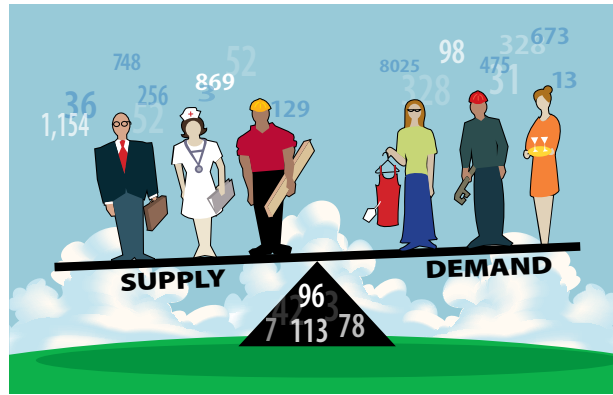
## Work In Progress

SUPPOSE AN AUTOMOTIVE MANUFACTURER in north Louisiana cuts 400 jobs, while a seafood processing company expands, creating 200 jobs.

What is the overall effect on the Louisiana workforce? How can educational institutions prepare graduates whose knowledge and skills match available jobs?

These are the kinds of questions UL Lafayette researchers will consider. The Louisiana Workforce Commission (formerly the Department of Labor) has signed a three-year, \$6 million contract with a UL Lafayette research consortium made up of the Cecil J. Picard Center for Child Development, the Center for Business and Information Technologies and the B.I. Moody III College of Business Administration.

“Business and industry are the consumers of the workforce we provide,” said Dr. Ramesh Kolluru, director of CBIT. “The Workforce Commission has



done a phenomenal job of finding out what kinds of jobs are being created and what business and industry say they need. That’s the demand.”

The UL consortium will help make job forecasts more accurate by including supply-side information, which Dr. Billy Ray Stokes, executive director of the Picard Center, calls “the educational pipeline.” Stokes said UL Lafayette is uniquely positioned to provide that information through the work of the Picard Center.

To make all that information

user-friendly, CBIT is developing a computer-driven workforce impact simulator. “It will allow you to ask ‘what if’ questions,” Kolluru said. “What kinds of businesses do we want to keep? What kinds of businesses do we want to strategically recruit?”

Meanwhile, the supply side – education – can provide strategic guidance and direction. “What kinds of talents and skills and economic training and educated workforce do we provide and build up, so that the state remains viable? Not just today, but 10 years from now, 25 years from now.

“To us, it represents more than just a project. It is a great opportunity for the university to make meaningful contributions to the community and to the state,” said Kolluru.

## CAJUN AMBASSADORS RECEIVE HONORARY DEGREES



George Rodrigue

Artist George Rodrigue, known best for his Blue Dog paintings, is the latest to earn an honorary doctorate from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. He was honored during the Graduate School’s commencement in May.

Rodrigue follows Cajun musician Zachary Richard, who was presented an honorary doctoral degree in fine arts in December.

Rodrigue, a native of New Iberia, La., attended UL Lafayette for six semesters in the mid-1960s before transferring to the Art Center College of Design in Los Angeles.

Rodrigue’s most famous series of paintings began when he painted his interpretation of a mythical *loup-garou*, or werewolf. He found inspiration in photos of his studio dog, Tiffany, who had died several years before. He painted the *loup-garou* as a pale grey-blue dog and gave it red eyes. Over time, he changed its eyes to yellow, creating a friendlier image.

In October 2008, Gov. Bobby Jindal declared Rodrigue as the artist laureate for Louisiana.



Zachary Richard

Richard, a native of Scott, La., is an internationally acclaimed singer-songwriter and poet. He is especially popular in France and Canada. His Canadian album releases have earned gold and platinum status and he has won two Felix awards, the French-Canadian equivalent of the Grammy Award.

An award-winning author, Richard has published three volumes of poetry and three children’s books. He is also a film producer. In 2000, he produced, narrated and scored “Against the Tide,” a television documentary detailing the history of the Cajun people.

Throughout his career, Richard has maintained strong ties to Louisiana. He is a founding member of Action Cadienne, a volunteer organization dedicated to the promotion of the French language and the Cajun culture of Louisiana.

Richard has been honored by the French and Canadian governments. In 1997, he was decorated Officier de l’Ordre des Arts et Lettres de la République Française. That same year, he was initiated into the Ordre des Francophones d’Amérique by the government of Quebec.