



**BRIGHT BULB: Hopkins' helping hands.** What? Something positive in the world of personal finance? It's true — Johns Hopkins is offering financial aid to employees looking to buy homes in the area surrounding the university's Homewood campus. Employees can apply for up to \$17,000 in aid. Not only is Hopkins helping boost the community by moving people into downtrodden areas, but it's helping the environment as well by cutting employee commute times.

## VIEWPOINTS

# Not all area biz is gloom, doom

By J. Thomas Sadowski

**N**o one has to be reminded that we are living in perilous times economically. The collapse of trusted, old-line firms like Lehman Brothers and Merrill Lynch, the pending sale of Constellation Energy, the bailout bill and the general malaise have all of us checking what's left of our 401(k)s and running for cover.

But while there are no easy answers and no quick fixes, there is some good news mixed in with all of the bad, and it's happening right here in Greater Baltimore. Despite all of the fluctuations on Wall Street, a number of local companies are not only continuing to grow, but are having a real effect in their respective industries.

Six of those companies are being highlighted at the Greater Baltimore Technology Council's annual TechNite program. Bill Me Later (digital payments), CSA Medical (cancer therapy), iBiquity (high-definition radio technology), Martek (nutritional products), MetaStorm (enterprise software) and Millennial Media (mobile marketing) have all risen quickly to become recognized leaders in their fields.

These companies offer proof positive that Baltimore's technology community is continuing to have a positive effect on the regional economy. Just as important, that kind of growth is likely to continue, thanks in part to the continuing commitment of the Maryland Technology Development Corporation. Through TEDCO's Maryland Technology Transfer Fund — a program designed to foster greater collaboration between businesses and Maryland universities and federal laboratories in order to bring technology into the marketplace — seven area tech companies recently received \$525,000 in funding.

That group of companies covers

a wide spectrum of technologies, from Pique's design-driven technology focused on women's footwear to Next Development's discoverED — a network of freshman-year to post graduation career tools for everyone involved in the college employment process.

These companies represent just the tip of the iceberg, though, when it comes to companies in this market that are continuing to grow and prosper despite Wall Street's woes. A recent report by the University of Massachusetts at Amherst indicates that Maryland could add nearly 37,000 new jobs over the next two years. That predicted growth is based on the distribution of more than \$1.9 billion in green public- and private-sector investments, including \$766 million in energy-efficient building retrofits; \$574 million in wind power, solar power and advanced biofuels; \$383 million in mass transit; and \$191 million in smart grid electrical transmission systems.

One of the local companies on the rise as a result of this new focus on green business is TerraLogos Green Home Services. A product of Baltimore's Emerging Technology Center, TerraLogos inspects area homes and recommends to homeowners solutions that address energy leaks, increase home efficiency and reduce utility leaks. Since it was founded two years ago, TerraLogos has grown and currently has plans to add six new employees next year.

Another green success story in the region is Chesapeake Solar. Based in Jessup, Chesapeake Solar was recently named as one of Inc. 500's fastest-growing companies in America. The firm, which designs and builds solar photovoltaic and hot-water systems for institutional, residential and commercial customers, has grown from \$260,000 in revenues in 2004 to more than \$2.2 million in 2007, a whopping 754

percent increase. Expectations for the company remain high, as consumers and businesses continue to seek environmentally friendly ways to control energy costs and the demand for solar energy skyrockets.

Baltimore-area companies are also making their mark globally. SafeNet recently announced that T-Mobile Czech Republic, the leading mobile phone carrier in that country, has selected its SafeBSF SIM-based authentication for its mobile TV trial platform.

Bottom line: Despite all the gloom and doom, there is a lot happening in the Greater Baltimore business community. Deals are happening,

dollars are changing hands, jobs are being created, and companies are growing. And that doesn't even begin to take into account the effect that Base Realignment and Closure will have on the region.

All of that might not make your 401(k) feel any better, but it should provide some hope. We will come out of this mess, and thanks to many of the companies mentioned here and countless others, Greater Baltimore will be well-positioned for future growth.

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## QUOTE OF THE DAY

*"It makes me very nervous to think that when applying for a job, I could be up against someone who has already put in five years with one of the big companies, such as Lehman Brothers. ... In all, it is very nerve-racking to see my future industry come apart like this."*

**- Katelyn Wells**, a 20-year-old senior and business administration major at the University of Baltimore

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## THE DAILY OUTRAGE

### Eviction convictions

**WHO:** Landlords who illegally evict renters

**WHAT:** The number of complaints of illegal eviction in Baltimore City is up 75 percent from last year — and that's not due to an enforcement crackdown either.

**WHY THEY ARE DOING IT:** Landlords cannot legally evict a tenant themselves — they must file a complaint in court and wait for a sheriff to do the actual eviction. Unfortunately, it seems that some landlords are getting fed up with due process

and taking matters into their own hands. And they're probably hoping the renter won't know how to fight back. What are the odds that someone who can't pay his rent is going to hire a lawyer?

**WHY IT'S A BAD IDEA:** We're all suffering during this economic downturn — but that's no excuse to break the law, especially when you're hurting people who have a hard time fighting back.

**WHERE TO VENT:** [baltimorehousing.org/index/insp\\_cels.asp](http://baltimorehousing.org/index/insp_cels.asp)