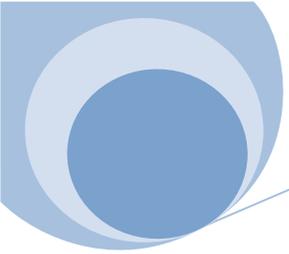


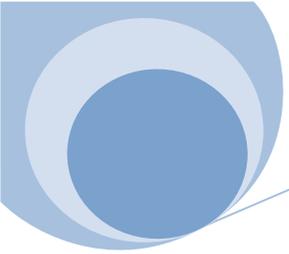
**Marshall County  
Economic Development  
Corporation  
2011 Summary**





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*The mission of the Marshall County Economic Development Corporation is to expand and diversify the economy of the County by fostering investment in new and existing facilities and creating entrepreneurial capacity.*



## “What’s new?”

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*New economic growth. New collaborations and partnerships. New tools for entrepreneurs. New business expansions. New state incentives and grants won for local projects. New jobs. New tax base. New marketing strategies. New plans for future development.*

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Dear Marshall County Stakeholder,

As it most likely was for you, too, 2011 was a sleeves-rolled-up, hard-working year for Marshall County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC). This report is issued to provide a glimpse into our activity and the anticipated impact of this work, and to illustrate what a strong resource Marshall County businesses have in MCEDC, Marshall County government and local municipal leaders.

With our active business retention program, I have the benefit of regularly hearing directly from entrepreneurs, business owners, plant managers and human resource professionals the reasons they choose to locate here, or the reasons a business has succeeded here. It is gratifying. When confronted with the challenges they do face, my job is to help wherever I can, which usually mean being a broker of resources, or charting a new path through bureaucracy on their behalf. Business leaders are an independent lot, however, and they don’t require much. They simply want to know the world is not against them when action is needed to keep their production lines running smoothly and their costs manageable. And when there is opportunity to grow, MCEDC is there to assist.

It is a different challenge to share the story of Marshall County’s assets to an external audience in order to encourage investment by new firms, but MCEDC is ramping up this effort. To this end we have reached out to our surrounding counties to build a stronger brand for our Michiana region as a whole. We have also conducted an independent review of our “product,” the development sites and buildings available in Marshall County, and dug deeper into assumptions about the existing industry clusters we might build upon. We are able to back up our claims with data about our workforce and competitive advantages. We will implement a targeted marketing strategy in 2012 that will put this information in front of the right corporate decision-makers and site selectors.

MCEDC is appreciative of the public and private partners who share our goals, and whose financial support allows for the advancement of the MCEDC mission on behalf of all Marshall County businesses and residents. I hope you will always feel comfortable reaching out to me with any questions you may have about our work, your role in it, or how the local and regional economic development efforts described in this report affect you directly.

*Jennifer Laurent, MCEDC Executive Director*

## BUSINESS EXPANSION

Several major employers in Marshall County expanded in 2011 or planned for expansion in 2012 with significant new investment in real estate, capital equipment and employment.

Some of these include:

- **Zentis North America**, international food processing facility producing fruit puree for yogurt markets – major investment in new production lines and employment growth
- **Coleman Cable, Inc.**, wire fabricator – new jobs, new warehouse operations project and proposed production facility expansion
- **Hoosier Racing Tire**, racing tire manufacturer – new on-site rubber mixing plant expansion and job creation
- **Indiana Technology and Manufacturing Companies (ITAMCO)**, precision gear machining – major manufacturing equipment investment
- **Whitley Products**, fabricator of tubing for engines – new warehouse operations expansion and jobs created
- **Summit Fiberglass**, fiberglass molding for specialty vehicles – new jobs brought to Bremen in acquisition of C&C Fiberglass
- **Kessler Crane**, camera crane systems for the film industry – new headquarters and production facility in Plymouth



**In 2011, Marshall County saw over \$50 million in actual and projected investment and +222 new jobs created by these local businesses.**

**Thank you** to all companies who chose to grow in Marshall County in 2011!

## BUSINESS EXPANSION

### The Role of Marshall County Economic Development Corporation



MCEDC is able to assist any company facing a consolidation, expansion, site selection or capital investment decision process that involves comparing the opportunity Indiana presents with that of other states. MCEDC will negotiate applications for incentives offered by localities and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) for eligible Marshall County projects. At 2011 year end, Marshall County has two competitive project awards from IEDC pending acceptance by local companies expanding operations and adding jobs. Payroll tax credits valued in excess of \$350,000 have been granted to these companies by IEDC based on job creation projections. Infrastructure needs, training programs, alternative financing sources – MCEDC is the first call a business should make when any opportunity for growth arises which needs a helpful push in order to happen.

**METRIC:** *Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) charts cumulative incentivized job creation on behalf of Indiana Local Economic Development organizations. Since its creation in 2008 through 2011, MCEDC has partnered with IEDC in bringing \$19,357,820 in capital investment and 536 jobs with an average hourly wage of \$14.73 to Marshall County. (All numbers actual, not projected.) MCEDC will continue to benchmark project results and guide resources to these and other companies positioned for growth.*



**The business climate in 2011 in Marshall County continued to demonstrate health and perseverance in spite of ongoing national recession recovery and global competitive pressures. A non-seasonally adjusted local unemployment rate of 11.3% in December, 2010 fell to 9.5% by November, 2011.**

## BUSINESS RETENTION

In 2010, MCEDC introduced a managed business retention program that would provide a schedule and platform for efficient and collaborative tracking of communications with existing Marshall County businesses. The goals of the Business Retention program are

- to identify and leverage support for potential new avenues for growth from within an existing business, and
- to direct assistance or resources to address challenges faced by a business that impede future success.

Personal contact made with a local business owner or manager during site visits and plant tours is invaluable for understanding the nature of the business. Follow-up dialogue that typically occurs can open many doors. Especially in a difficult macroeconomic climate, every manufacturer is trying to operate at its most lean. Reducing waste may be a concern, or shortening a supply chain with inputs that might be sourced locally. MCEDC can connect businesses with the Purdue Manufacturing Extension Program or associations like the Michiana Lean Network, which provides ongoing training and support for certifications and lean production practices. An otherwise unknown nearby company may desire to purchase and profitably recycle another company's by-products, and MCEDC may provide an introduction.



Staff from Wiers Trucking

**METRIC:** *MCEDC staff visited 41 Marshall County businesses in 2011 to tour facilities with business owners and managers. Intensive interviews with business owners and managers reveal important details about the benefits of doing business in Marshall County, as well as current trends and looming challenges. MCEDC is building a reputation as an effective advocate for business growth and as an engaged, go-to partner to business in identifying needed solutions.*

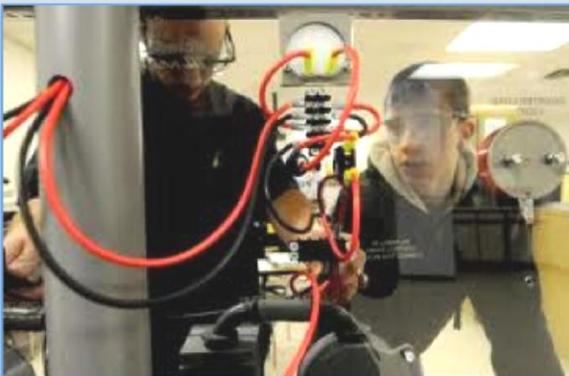
## BUSINESS RETENTION

*What we have learned:* Our automotive industries like **Nishikawa Standard** and **Universal Bearings** are poised for unprecedented demand, and will in 2012 be positioning to meet aggressive contractual sales projections. Our second- and third-generation family companies like **ITAMCO**, **Culver Tool**, **Bates Corporation** and **Injection Plastics** are developing new proprietary processes and unique product offerings that will sustain them for twenty-first century technological competitiveness. Often a facility is a limiting factor – is capacity there to bid on a new multimillion dollar order? MCEDC has been consulted on physical plant expansions and new equipment investment decisions. An emerging critical issue for manufacturing sectors throughout the Midwest is the shortfall of semi-skilled workers, the so-called “skills gap” that is frustrating the expansion efforts of viable businesses, and that contradicts the belief that there are not enough jobs for people willing to work. When asked, most Marshall County businesses report some degree of difficulty in hiring qualified candidates. MCEDC is leading the charge to address this before it becomes a liability for our area.

### NEW COLLABORATION: MARSHALL COUNTY INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION

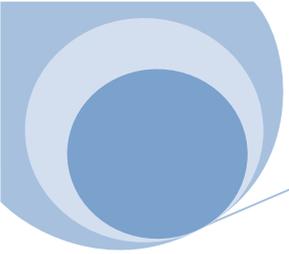
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In 2011, MCEDC participated in brainstorming a new direction for the **Marshall County Industrial Association** (MCIA) as a workforce development arm. MCIA is a longstanding association of business leaders which was originally organized as a networking group with a mission of connecting business to education. In 2011, the standing MCIA Board voted to direct the energies of the group to a more closely-defined mission of addressing the critical skills gap among Marshall County students, adult learners and industry. This initiative is a direct response from participants in the November, 2010 “Community Conversation on Economic Development” and the subsequent November, 2011 “Community Conversation on Education and Workforce,” both convened by the Marshall County Community Foundation and MCEDC.



A new mission statement and agenda of needs assessment outreach and program activities aimed at manufacturers and schools was decided upon in the fourth quarter of 2011. A membership drive to encourage the participation of all Marshall County businesses and education leaders will be launched in early 2012. A primary goal will be to coordinate opportunity paths between training programs and introductory career placements, including internships and apprenticeships, to support existing industry. MCIA will also implement a campaign among guidance counselors and placement agencies about high-demand jobs, and call upon businesses to offer time and equipment for on-site training certifications.

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## BUSINESS ATTRACTION & MARKETING

The uncertainty that has persisted in the economic climate since 2009 has widely decimated domestic capital investment and the U.S. industrial real estate market. For most companies, uncertainty has meant continued caution and exploration of alternatives that do not include new facility investment. And when a business has required a new location, due diligence is extreme. For economic development agencies like MCEDC, this means working to understand and reduce risk wherever we can — in the physical factors, operating factors, and quality-of-life factors for which we know we will be graded. Fewer active prospects and more hungry locations imply even greater competition — ready communities with reduced risk profiles will win the jobs. MCEDC thus becomes involved in site prep and infrastructure planning, labor measurement and retooling, and advocacy for controlling public costs. At the same time, continued vision and investment is needed in the quality of life factors that will make Marshall County distinctive and a community of choice.

MCEDC responds to all leads within a prioritized timeframe, providing accurate and up to date information on local utility infrastructure, estimated average wage rates, proximity to transportation corridors, and all other pertinent data required to win a second look.

### NEW MARKETING STRATEGIES: MICHIANA PARTNERSHIP



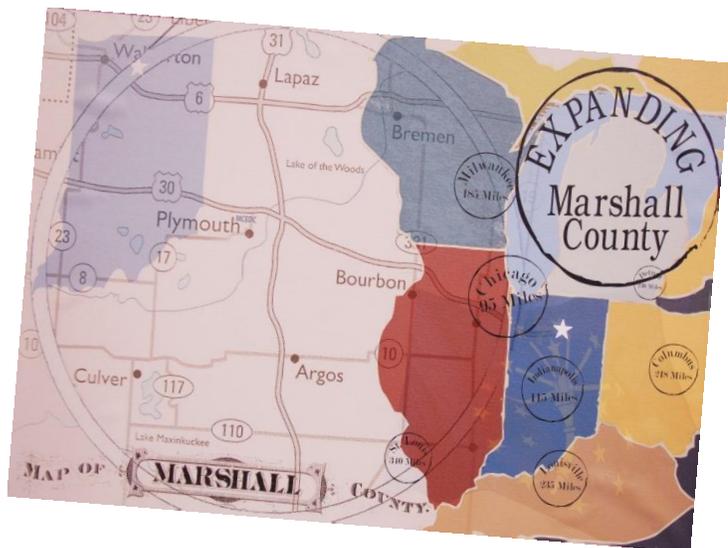
**Michiana Partnership**, a regional economic development marketing coalition that includes Marshall County and six neighboring Indiana and Michigan counties, was organized and incorporated in 2011. This 501(c) 3 organization will leverage local business attraction marketing budgets to create a professional, targeted place-based marketing campaign. The Michiana Partnership website will launch in early 2012, and will be designed to direct traffic to local sites for property or community-specific data and contact information. Proximity to the major Chicago, Detroit and Indianapolis markets; a shared, high-quality labor shed; and a defined emphasis on manufacturing and University-led technology development will be the basis of the Michiana Partnership marketing message.

Michiana Partnership is currently working with **Ady-Voltedge** on completion of a regional marketing strategy. Ady-Voltedge is a Madison, WI-based consulting firm with expertise in economic development/site-selector targeted marketing and branding. Leveraging the firm's research results for the region, in 2011 MCEDC also engaged Ady-Voltedge to create a **marketing strategy specific to Marshall County**. The industry clusters and competitive advantages we wish to highlight will be quantified and ranked in order to identify our best opportunities for recruitment. A new MCEDC website will also launch in early 2012 that will be easier to navigate and more frequently updated with news and social media content. The new website will be informed by a high level of data on available workforce, transportation assets, real estate, taxes and incentives pertinent to the site selection process and will streamline information gathering about development opportunities in our area.

## BUSINESS ATTRACTION & MARKETING

MCEDC regularly participates in conferences and trade shows with the aim of promoting Marshall County to targeted audiences, as well as learning about best practices and new tools for Economic Development today. In doing so, we are able to learn what top-competing localities present as inducements to brokers and corporate site selection executives, and the type of data that goes into the decision matrix before a local Economic Development organization like MCEDC is ever contacted directly.

MCEDC will continue to work with the Michiana Partnership stakeholders to recruit participation in and produce the annual **Michiana Wage & Benefits Survey**. This extensive report is relied upon by existing local businesses to benchmark hiring ranges for personnel against like businesses in the area. We also have determined that this important survey to be an attraction tool as well, in showcasing a favorable cost of labor in the Midwest compared to other locations. A free report is issued to any business who contributes data to the survey.



**Metric: At 2011 year end, MCEDC is actively working with leads to promote new development on properties in Marshall County. The status of these is considered “in serious discussions,” meaning a detailed fact-finding stage as follow up to an initial inquiry, prior to a negotiation phase. It is our responsibility to research and pursue each opportunity for which Marshall County is able to compete.**

## ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT



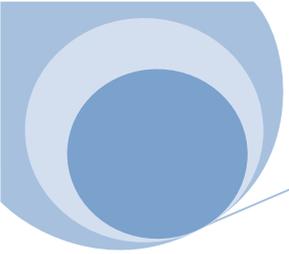
### NORTH CENTRAL INDIANA SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

*"[North Central SBDC Director] Jan Fye is a godsend; I don't know where my business would be without her advice over the years!"* says Connie Laudeman of Bremen, owner of T.J. Snuggles, a canvas tent supplier to the RV industry. "I am now seeking diversification opportunities and a qualified plant manager, and Jan and Jennifer with MCEDC are helping me identify the skills I really need and how to generate interest in the position from their regional networks. SBDC is definitely not just for start-up companies. I am always learning!"

A partnership was established in the second quarter of 2011 between MCEDC and the North Central Indiana Small Business Development Center to bring a "circuit-rider" program of professional business counseling services to our Plymouth office. Alan Steele, ISBDC Business Advisor, provides individual clients one hour of free confidential business assistance sessions monthly, with unlimited access to the data and resources available through the SBDC network. MCEDC has successfully promoted this program with the assistance of local media outlets, Chambers and area lenders. The program provides entrepreneurs with free or low-cost business planning workshops, financial reviews, marketing assistance, and personnel/management support in all phases of business development, from conceptual phases and start-up to succession planning.

**METRIC:** *23 Marshall County entrepreneurs and business owners participated in advisement with ISBDC staff from April-December, 2011, including South Bend SBDC and Plymouth MCEDC locations.*

**OUTCOME:** *50% of Marshall County ISBDC clients in 2011 have been pre-venture, meaning planning to open a business, while 50% are established business owners. Business starts will be tracked from this client base, realizing that some will flourish while some will struggle to get off the ground. Access to ongoing advice and support for existing small business owners is most critical for retaining jobs and economic vitality in our communities.*



## ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT

### NEW TOOLS FOR ENTREPRENEURS: ELEVATE VENTURES

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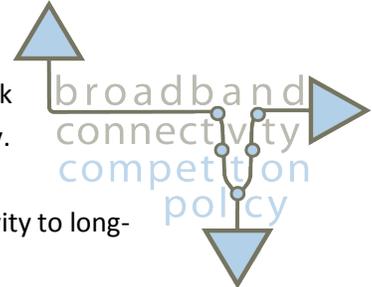


An “Entrepreneur-in-Residence” mentorship program was the first initiative launched in 2011 by Elevate Ventures, a new Venture Development partnership within our North Central Indiana region created with seed funding from Indiana Economic Development Corporation. The goal of Elevate Ventures is to create economic transformation by connecting entrepreneurs leading high potential, early-stage companies with specialized support, technical resources as well as angel capital funding networks. The long-term vision of Elevate Ventures, shared by participating partners like MCEDC, is to create and nurture high-growth and high-impact technology-based entrepreneurial companies, leading to economic diversity, increased talent attraction and retention, growth in investment dollars and deal flow, and accelerated wealth and job creation in the area. We are currently identifying second-stage Marshall County companies to connect as clients to the business acceleration program, which is based at Innovation Park @ Notre Dame.

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## COMMUNITY, ADVOCACY & INFRASTRUCTURE

The 2012 Strategic Plan for the St. Joseph Valley Metronet (SJVM) outlines a plan for regional deployment of the carrier-neutral 50-mile fiber optic network that currently loops South Bend and Mishawaka in adjacent St. Joseph County. Conceived as an Economic Development tool by a consortium of business, education and civic leaders, SJVM takes advantage of proximity and connectivity to long-haul fiber lines running through the area linking Chicago to the east coast.



Several opportunities exist for Marshall County to connect with the fiber networks that have grown around us to improve speed, capacity and reliability of current broadband offerings. MCEDC is working with the Michiana Area Council of Governments, the Indiana Department of Transportation, Indiana Economic Development Corporation, as well as multiple carriers and wireless providers hoping to improve service delivery to our area in the near term. This remains our #1 advocacy priority until the need for a more competitive telecommunications infrastructure with more consumer options is met.

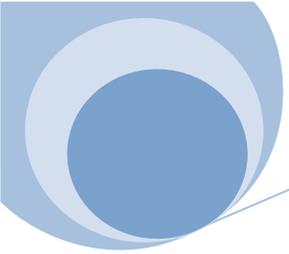
MCEDC routinely advocates for infrastructure projects that will enhance the quality of life for Marshall County residents as well as better our prospects for meeting the needs of new and existing businesses.

**Marshall County Economic Development Corporation** was represented on the following advisory boards and committees in 2011:

*Plymouth New Tech Steering Committee; Plymouth Technology Squared Committee; Marshall County Lifelong Learning Network Board of Directors; Marshall County Industrial Association Board of Directors; Marshall County Community Conversation Planning Team; Marshall County Leadership; North Central Indiana Small Business Development Corporation Board of Directors; Business Development Corporation, Inc.; JumpStart Regional Entrepreneurship Action Plan Steering Committee; Regional Business Outreach Initiative Steering Team*

**Marshall County Economic Development Corporation** was a partnering member of the following organizations in 2011:

*Bremen Chamber of Commerce; Culver Chamber of Commerce; Plymouth Chamber of Commerce; U.S. 31 Coalition; Michiana Partnership, Inc.; Northern Indiana Coalition of Chambers of Commerce; Elevate Ventures; Indiana Economic Development Association; Mid-America Economic Development Council; International Economic Development Corporation*



**The Marshall County Economic Development Corporation Staff includes:**

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Derek Spier, Economic Development Specialist, [Derek@marshallcountyedc.org](mailto:Derek@marshallcountyedc.org)

Pamela Davis, Office Manager, [pam@marshallcountyedc.org](mailto:pam@marshallcountyedc.org)

**The Marshall County Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors includes:**

Kevin Berger, President, representing Culver

Bill Davis, Vice-President, representing Bremen

Don Mahoney, Secretary-Treasurer, representing Argos

Don Balka, representing LaPaz

Jim Condon, representing Plymouth

Bill Keyser, representing Bourbon

Roger Umbaugh, representing Marshall County

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