



NEWS from MCEDC

Marshall County Economic Development Corporation

September 2013

MCEDC Community Leaders Continue Discussion on Countywide Development Opportunities

On Wednesday, August 28th, the Marshall County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) held the third in an ongoing series of discussions labeled "County Development for the Future" at the Swan Lake Resort & Conference Center. The purpose of this event, attended by 33 MCEDC stakeholders was to report progress on action items set out at the prior session and discuss future development opportunities, as well as hurdles throughout the County.



At prior events, local leaders laid out some positive steps that were necessary to begin a proactive approach to new development. Representatives from each municipality in Marshall County, as well as the County itself, reported action taken towards completion of their goals. Some of the accomplishments since May were significant. The City of Plymouth contracted with USI Engineering to conduct design and engineering work for placement of conduit that will allow Metronet to bring their fiber optic network into Marshall County. Culver, LaPaz and Plymouth have all updated their comprehensive plans. In addition, the Town of Argos continues to move towards having a 75 acre shovel-ready site for new advanced manufacturing development. Argos has partnered with MCEDC and the Indiana Municipal Power Agency (IMPA) to situate and market the site just off US 31.



Jay M. Bahr, Executive Director of the MCEDC, stated that, "The momentum and excitement in Marshall County is palpable. We have positive traction and all of our communities are striving to keep the ball moving ever closer to the goal line."

Attending this session were Charlie Sparks, Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) Vice President of Business Development and David Behr, IEDC's Director for the North Central Region. Both men spoke of the importance of state, county and local level economic development collaboration. Mr. Behr noted that "what you are doing in Marshall County is not being done in many other counties, including your smaller towns in the county wide conversations."



At the conclusion of the event, the group decided to reconvene to continue the discussion and report back on continued progress.

Focus on Marshall County Industry: **Plymouth's Kessler Crane to Expand & Receives State Honors**



[Kessler Crane, Inc.](#) recently announced a major expansion of its Plymouth-based corporate headquarters and manufacturing facility. The company will be relocating to a

vacant industrial building on Western Avenue formerly occupied by American Containers.

The \$2 million investment includes the rehabilitation of a 70,000 sq. ft. facility and the acquisition of \$1.2 million in additional high tech manufacturing and information technology equipment, and software. The expansion is currently underway and is expected to occur over the next two years. Through this expansion, the company plans to nearly double their workforce from 50 to 90 employees by the end of 2015.

At the request of the MCEDC, the City of Plymouth approved a 6 year real and a 5 year personal property tax abatement supporting Kessler's planned investment. The State of Indiana has offered additional incentives in the form of approximately \$325,000 in tax credits based upon job creation plans.

Established in 2003, Kessler Crane is an industry leading manufacturer of innovative tools for filmmakers including: camera cranes and jibs, camera motion control systems, camera sliders and dollies, tripods and heads and other camera mounting and grip accessories. The company was recently recognized as one of only 33 companies in Indiana as a 2013 "Company to Watch", an awards program presented by the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, the Small Business Development Center and the Edward Lowe Foundation. Over 300 companies were nominated for this award that recognizes outstanding privately-held second-stage companies. These companies are

past the startup phase, are considered to be established, and face issues of growth, not survival. Nominated companies must have between 6 to 150 full-time employees and between \$750,000 to \$100 million in annual revenue or capital.

"Kessler Crane embodies the entrepreneurial spirit," said Jay Bahr, Executive Director of the Marshall County Economic Development Corporation. "Kessler Crane demonstrates what it takes to stand out in the marketplace. Because we offer a low-cost of doing business combined with a skilled workforce, companies of all sizes know that they can exercise a competitive advantage in Marshall County."

Mayor Mark Senter said, "The company and its founder, Eric Kessler, are truly innovative and are great examples of Hoosier entrepreneurship." "The City of Plymouth is pleased to be a part of Kessler's growth, as we know this development will have an impact throughout the area," the Mayor continued.

Source: City of Plymouth & MCEDC

Focus on Workforce Development & Education: Local Partnership Launches Precision Tool Training in Plymouth Schools

Beginning this fall, high school students from throughout Marshall County have the opportunity to enroll in a dual credit precision tool manufacturing course. These courses are being taught in a completely renovated facility at Plymouth High School by an instructor from Ivy Tech.

Due to Ivy Tech's involvement, the students enrolled will receive credit both toward their high school diploma and toward an associates degree. All of the new CNC equipment, which is valued at approximately \$100,000, and the technical assistance to launch the program was donated by ITAMCO.



Plymouth School Corporation Superintendent Daniel Tyree said, "The school's role is to prepare our students for the challenges of careers and/or college courses. Specifically, we have the obligation to provide direct training to students so they can walk right out of high school and into a job in Marshall County. Because there is a significant skills gap in our precision manufacturing areas, we felt

the need to join forces with manufacturing to provide a center for training. I hope this is the first of many partnerships we can entertain to prepare our students for the workforce."

According to Ivy Tech North Central Chancellor Thomas Colley, "Ivy Tech's role in training a skilled workforce is vitally important to the economic stability of our region. Manufacturers in the Marshall County area communicated to both Ivy Tech and the Plymouth Community School Corporation the desire to partner with us to provide training opportunities to high school students that will lead to jobs immediately after graduation."

Mark Neidig II, purchasing manager at ITAMCO, said, "ITAMCO feels strongly about the need to maintain a vibrant domestic manufacturing base that is not just competitive globally, but leads the way. Part of maintaining America's position as the global manufacturing leader is combating the skills gap by being an active participant in the development of our local workforce. The program at PHS is a first step towards reversing the skills gap and making our students more successful in the global economy."

Current enrollment in the course includes 13 students from the Plymouth, Culver, and John Glenn school districts. The courses are open to students in the 10 school corporations that are a part of the North Central Vocational Cooperative.

[Click here for more information on the program.](#)

Source: WTCA & Ivy Tech

Focus on Entrepreneurial Development: Elevate Ventures Announces Openings for Economic Gardening Program

[Elevate Ventures](#), a private venture development organization that assists and invests in high-potential Indiana companies, recently announced that only a few openings remain in its popular Economic Gardening Program, a program that provides expert guidance, tools, knowledge and implementation services to companies seeking continued growth.



The program evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the company, and the Edward Lowe Foundation provides participants with a proposal for managers to take the next steps to grow the business. Participants also get a detailed leadership analysis and they're connected with a peer roundtable for advice and help.

The Elevate Ventures Economic Gardening Program has recently celebrated significant program success. Participating companies averaged a projected 30% increase in revenue and a 21% projected growth in employment within one year of completing the program.

Economic Gardening is provided for free to participants. Complementing this helpful program, Elevate Ventures provides business analysis and advisory services to entrepreneurs to develop their businesses to interest investment from private sources.

For Economic Gardening Program qualification information or to apply, please contact Kregg Kiel, Entrepreneur-In-Residence, North Central Region, at (317) 252-0285, ext. 301 or visit www.elevateventures.com/programs/economic-gardening to apply.

Source: Elevate Ventures

Purdue's Manufacturing Extension Partnership to Offer Leadership Development Workshops, Six Sigma Training & Manufacturing Day Event

The Purdue Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) is offering a series of workshops focusing on Leadership Development and Six Sigma Training.

These courses will be held in Plymouth and South Bend providing a great opportunity to sharpen your employees' skills for a relatively low cost.



Leadership Development Series - Plymouth

- ***Effective Communication*** - October 10
- ***Understanding Leadership Essentials to Grow Leaders*** - October 24
- ***Understanding Motivation in the Workplace*** - November 7
- ***Problem Solving & Decision Making in the Workplace*** - November 21
- ***Managing Conflict & Coaching in the Workplace*** - December 5

[Click here for more details & registration for the Leadership Development Workshops.](#)

Six Sigma Green Belt & Black Belt Certificate Training - South Bend

- ***Green Belt Training*** - November 8, 15 & 22, and December 6, 13 & 20
- ***Black Belt Training***- November 8, 15 & 22, December 6, 13 & 20, January 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31, and February 7
[Click here for more details & registration for the Six Sigma Training.](#)

Manufacturing Day 2013 - Purdue College of Technology - October 17

In addition to the above workshops, Purdue MEP together with the Purdue College of Technology - South Bend will be celebrating "Manufacturing Day 2013" on October 17th.

This free event will focus on resources available to businesses including Purdue Technology's majors, internships, and engagement with industry, and services available through WorkOne. Additional presentations will include "Making your Business Meaningfully Unique" and "Get the Right Customers".

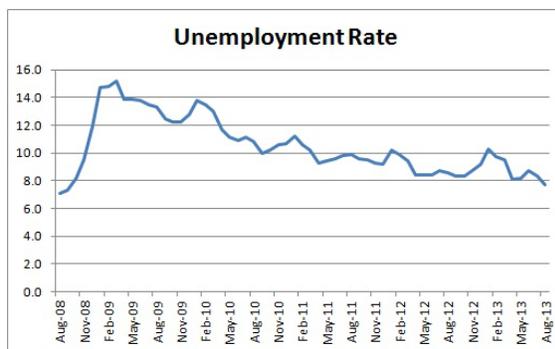
[Click here for more details & free registration to the "Manufacturing Day" event.](#)

For information regarding other upcoming Purdue MEP courses to be held throughout Indiana, please visit <http://www.mep.purdue.edu/>.

Continuing Rebound from the Great Depression: Latest Preliminary Data Reveals County Unemployment Rate Decline

The latest unemployment data provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics reveals that the unemployment rate is still continuing its downward trend and is below 8.0 percent for the first time since September 2008.

The preliminary August 2013 unemployment rate stands at 7.7 percent and is a full 1 percent lower than June and 2.6 percent lower than the first of the year.



While the number of those in the labor force has remained relatively flat at around 22,000, almost 600 more people are employed than in January 2013. The labor force is comprised of those who have jobs or are seeking a job, are at least 16 years old, are not serving in the military and are not institutionalized.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

Featured Industrial Property: **1100 Flora Street, Plymouth - PIDCO Industrial Park**

For Sale or Lease - Immediately Available

Located approximately one-half mile from U.S. 30 and 1.5 miles from U.S. 31, this 61,200 sq. ft. building sits on 11.5 acres in the Plymouth Industrial Park.

The building was originally constructed in 1979, and several improvements were made in 2011 including an industrial sprinkler system and new metal roof.



Other highlights include pre-engineered steel & metal side wall panels, rail access via Norfolk Southern, 21 ft. ceiling heights, a NIPSCO electric substation (solely serving this building), 7 loading docks, 1 overhead door, and 1,500 sq. ft. of office space. Sanitary sewer and water are provided by the City of Plymouth.

[Click here for more information on this available property!](#)

Comment from Jay Bahr.....

Time Flies.....



I don't know if it's a function of getting older or simply that I am enjoying the work I am doing and that I've been so busy over the past five months. It seems that all I have to do is look at my calendar and another month has gone by. For the time being I am going to ignore the possibility of early onset Alzheimer's and chalk it up to the fact that over the past five months I have been engaged in some very meaningful projects with some very energetic and intelligent people from all across Marshall County and I have personally enjoyed the work to the point of losing

track of time.

Here are some examples of the projects that the Marshall County Economic Development Corporation has been working on:

- Re-invigorating a business retention program by visiting with 33 businesses to build relationships with existing Marshall County businesses and gain understanding of how MCEDC can best serve them.
- Got past some serious hurdles and currently very close to ground-breaking for a 45,000 square foot "shell building" to be constructed through a public-private partnership, including the City of Plymouth, Plymouth Redevelopment Commission, MCEDC, PIDCO and Garmong Construction.
- Meeting with site selection consultants from outside the region to "sell" Marshall County as a great place to locate manufacturing facilities.
- Continuing to facilitate and encourage local efforts underway to create new development sites, much of this work has focused on the State's Shovel Ready program. Plymouth has one Shovel Ready certified site and I expect Argos will be Marshall County's second such site.
- Connecting educators with industry and communicating the workforce needs of industry to education and training organizations.

Through all these activities I have the privilege of meeting and working with highly capable and engaging professionals. As with many aspects of life, I find it's the people that can make a task enjoyable, and that has certainly been the case here in Marshall County. Add to that the ability to work on highly interesting projects and you have a real win-win situation.

I will continue to keep you informed of MCEDC accomplishments. I expect that the list will grow over time.

Contact Information

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