



## NEWS from MCEDC

### Marshall County Economic Development Corporation

March 2014

## *MCEDC Releases 2013 Annual Report: Focuses on Business Expansions, Retention & Attraction Efforts*



The mission of the MCEDC is to expand and diversify the economy of the County by fostering investment in new and existing facilities and creating entrepreneurial capacity.

The recently released 2013 Annual Report identifies how the MCEDC is striving to fulfill its mission. The report highlights assistance provided in many countywide business retention, expansion, and attraction projects in addition to other programs and initiatives focused on elevating our attractiveness for future investment and entrepreneurial development.

Throughout 2013, several businesses announced projects that included relocations and expansions. These projects will create additional jobs and involve new investments in facilities and equipment. The expansions were either publically announced in 2013, or are expected to begin in 2014.

The local companies that are growing are diverse ranging from Kessler Crane, a film industry equipment manufacturer; to American Containers, a corrugated packaging company for doors and windows; and to Nishikawa Cooper, an automotive rubber seals and trim manufacturer. These companies together with other announcements will result in an estimated 390 new jobs and over \$24 million in new investment!

For additional information on these expansions and other projects, please review our 2013 Annual Report located [here](#) on the MCEDC's website.

## *Focus on Marshall County Industry: American Containers Continues with Expansion Plans*

[American Containers, Inc.](#), which has its corporate headquarters and primary manufacturing facility in Plymouth, is moving forward with their expansion plans



as initially announced last November.

As a part of the expansion, the company is purchasing approximately \$3 million in new manufacturing equipment, and constructing a 39,000 sq. ft. building addition. The addition will add warehousing space and allow for the reconfiguration of the production area to accommodate the new equipment.

MCEDC assisted the company in applying for and receiving a personal property tax abatement for the new equipment last year. This year, we continued to assist the company through filing a real property tax abatement request on their behalf, and providing representation at the Council meeting. On March 10th, the Plymouth City Council approved a 10 year real property tax abatement supporting their approximate \$1.5 million building expansion.

As previously reported, the expansion project is expected to begin early this spring as we enter the beginning of the construction season. The project will add approximately 6 new employees to their current workforce of 47 associates.

MCEDC and American Containers greatly appreciates the support of the City of Plymouth in expanding a long established homegrown company!

## *Focus on Infrastructure:* County Council Approves Funding for Broadband Infrastructure



On January 13th, the Marshall County Council approved the final piece of public financing for a \$3 million infrastructure project that will extend the Metronet from South Bend into Plymouth. Installation of underground conduit which will provide access to a high-speed, high-capacity, dark fiber broadband network should begin during the spring construction season. The first subscribers are expected to be connected this fall.

Approving and funding the expansion required vision and cooperation among public officials in the two counties. Mary Jan Hedman, Executive Director of Metronet, praised commissioners and council members in St. Joseph and Marshall counties, as well as the mayor, council and redevelopment officials in Plymouth, for willingness to invest in a project that will bring benefits beyond their governmental jurisdictions.

Funding for the project was appropriated by Marshall County, the City of Plymouth, St. Joseph County, and the Metronet. A similar public-private partnership was used to build out the network in St. Joseph County, with South Bend, Mishawaka and St. Joseph County giving Metronet access to conduit through which to extend fiber optic cable. In return, the governmental entities receive free access to fiber. The agreements lessen the burden of government by saving thousands of dollars in telecommunications expenses as well as supporting innovation in delivering services.

In St. Joseph County, a group of initial capital contributors agreed to prepay several years of subscription fees to help fund the fiber build out. The same model will be followed in Marshall County. Two of those initial supporters, Hoosier Racing Tire and St. Joseph Regional Medical Center, told the Marshall County Council in December that the Metronet access was vital to continued growth of their organizations. MCEDC also pointed out that access to affordable broadband was an important factor in retaining and attracting new business investment.

Loretta Schmidt, who is president of the SJRMC Plymouth Campus, explained the benefits the Metronet extension will bring to the Plymouth Campus and the patient community.

"St. Joseph Regional Medical Center in South Bend became a founding partner in the St. Joe Valley Metronet in 2005. Since that time we have realized the benefits of fiber-optic data connectivity between the hospital, the data center, and many of our employed physician practices throughout St. Joseph County. This has resulted in substantial cost savings to our organization and vastly improved services to our patients," she said.

"In 2014, we will be able to offer these benefits to our hospital in Plymouth. This will allow patient information such as medical records, images, and test results to be transmitted securely between South Bend in much higher volumes and at a speed which is not possible today," she said.

"Since 2005 it is estimated that SJRMC has saved more than \$200,000 per year by utilizing the Metronet in St. Joseph County. It is projected that an additional \$150,000 per year can be saved in Marshall County," she added.

"We're proud that St. Joseph Regional Medical Center will become a founding partner in this endeavor along with our friends at Hoosier Tire," she said, and she praised the "cooperative efforts of the St. Joe Valley Metronet, Marshall County, St. Joseph County, and the City of Plymouth, in extending the network.

For further information, contact Mary Jan Hedman, Executive Director, with the St. Joe Valley Metronet at (574) 968-5353.

*Source: St. Joseph Valley Metronet*

## Marshall County Awarded Funding for STEM Education Initiative Through Project Lead the Way

On March 2nd, the United Way of Marshall County and the MCEDC announced that all K-12 schools in Marshall County were eligible recipients of grant funding available through a regional STEM Education Initiative. Our local

leaders and school corporations learned that our region was successful in raising the



necessary matching funds for this grant opportunity through the Corporate Partnership for Economic Growth (CPEG) and Project Lead the Way (PLTW) at a STEM teacher training event held at the University of Notre Dame.

PLTW, the nation's leading provider of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs, selected Northern Indiana to become a model region for PLTW, providing all K-12 schools, both public and private, in a five-county area with the opportunity to implement PLTW's rigorous, world-class STEM programs in engineering, biomedical science, and computer science. The partnership creates a \$4.4 million matching grant pilot program to offset start-up costs associated with teacher training, participation fees, and required equipment and will be available to schools for the 2014-15 school year through 2016. Schools in the five-county area of Elkhart, Fulton, Kosciusko, Marshall, and St. Joseph could immediately begin applying for grant funds. Applications for the 2014-15 academic year are due on March 31, and schools will be accepted and notified in April.

To be selected as a model region, the United Way and MCEDC had to raise \$270,000 for Marshall County schools to participate. MCEDC dedicated \$30,000 over a three-year period in support of the initiative.

"The response from businesses, local units of government, and community leaders across the county was quick and overwhelmingly positive," said Linda Yoder, Executive Director for the United Way of Marshall County and the Marshall County Community Foundation. "The opportunity to establish a much higher concentration of PLTW's STEM curriculum in this region is compelling in terms of both developing a competitive workforce to boost the local economy and improving the quality of life for individuals who live and work here."

In addition to providing every student with access to PLTW, the regional partnership with PLTW engages the local community, business and industry and will help develop a robust talent pipeline for those businesses and industries.

"We have offered the design PLTW classes in the junior high and the high school for the last five years. Besides being very popular with our students, these classes have become a bridge to the labor force and schools of engineering. The classes are rigorous, but students from all walks of life excel in the curriculum," said Dan Tyree, Superintendent of Plymouth School Corporation.

In addition to Marshall County, the counties of Elkhart, Fulton, Kosciusko and St. Joseph Counties are participating.

The funding for Marshall County was raised from a combination of business and industry, economic development organizations, community foundations, colleges and universities, local nonprofits, and individual philanthropists. In addition to MCEDC, other donors include Argos Town Council, Bourbon Town Council, Bremen Redevelopment Commission, Culver Redevelopment Commission, First State Bank of Bourbon, Marshall County Community Foundation, Inc., Plymouth Redevelopment Commission, Ralph and Louise Mason, St Joseph Regional Medical Center - Plymouth, United Way of Marshall County, Inc, Universal Bearings LLC, Weidner and Company P.C. and Wiers International Trucks.

Source: Corporate Partnership for Economic Growth (CPEG) & MCEDC

## *Workforce Development Training:* Purdue's Technical Assistance Program Highlights Program Offerings and 2013 Annual Statistics

The Purdue Technical Assistance Program (TAP) is a resource that provides high-value solutions to help Indiana businesses maximize their success by increasing profits, reducing costs, and implementing growth and innovation engineering systems. Economic impacts are considerable.



Since 1986, Purdue TAP has assisted over 13,000 organizations, trained over 34,000 employees, created or retained over \$1 billion in sales, increased capital investments by \$243 million, contributed to cost savings of \$120 million, and created or retained over 13,000 jobs in the state.

From 2012 to 2013, the TAP program has served 15 employers in Marshall County, and 100 employers within our eight county North Central Indiana region. Furthermore, Purdue TAP offices are located in both St. Joseph and LaPorte County, so assistance in solving your business problem is never far away!

The following examples are a sampling of the work handled by Purdue TAP to help businesses build upon their success:

- **Lean Manufacturing** - Principles to identify and eliminate waste.
- **Six Sigma** (see below training offered in South Bend) - Programs focused on workplace organization, advanced manufacturing principles, and strategic approaches to problem solving.
- **Energy Efficiency** - Providing detailed energy and sustainability assessments.
- **Training within Industry** - Principles focused on continuous improvements and workforce training.
- **Engineering and Technical Project Assistance** - Short-term faculty and student assistance for various business and technical issues.

### ***Upcoming Six Sigma White, Green & Black Belt Certificate Training to be offered in South Bend***

- **White Belt Training** - 1 Day - April 17th
- **Green Belt Training** - 6 Days - Various dates beginning April 17th and ending May 6th

- **Black Belt Training** - January 27, 29 & February 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26 & March 3 and 5  
Click [here](#) for more details & registration for the Six Sigma White Belt Training or [here](#) for the Six Sigma Green & White Belt Training.

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

Source: David Snow, Purdue TAP & Manufacturing Center Director

## Entrepreneurial Development: Notre Dame to Host Start Up Weekend



**Startup Weekend is coming to Notre Dame the weekend of April 4, 2014!**

Startup Weekends are 54-hour events designed to provide superior experiential education for technical and non-technical entrepreneurs. The weekend events are centered on action, innovation, and education. Beginning with Friday night pitches and continuing through testing, business model development, and basic prototype creation, Startup Weekends culminate in Sunday night demos to a panel of potential investors and local entrepreneurs. Participants are challenged with building functional startups during the event and are able to collaborate with like-minded individuals outside of their daily networks.

What you'll get out of the event:

- **Education:** Startup Weekends are all about learning by doing, whether you're learning a new skill or a new way of thinking. Don't just listen to theory, build your own strategy and test it as you go.
- **Co-Founder Dating:** The people who come to Startup Weekend are serious about learning how to build and launch startups. Create relationships that last long past the weekend.
- **Build Your Network:** Startup Weekend works hard to recruit high quality, driven entrepreneurs- like you!
- **Learn New Skills:** With a whole weekend dedicated to letting your creative juices flow, Startup Weekends are perfect opportunities to work on a new platform, learn a new programming language, or give marketing a try. With nothing to lose there's no reason not to step outside your comfort zone.
- **Learn How to Launch a Business (and Actually Do It!):** Startup Weekend is the epitome of Lean Startup Methodology.
- **Mentorship:** Local tech and startup leaders participate in Startup Weekends and give feedback to participants. Interact with the movers and shakers in your community.
- **Get Access to Valuable Startup Resources:** By participating in Startup Weekend you are given instant access to great products and tools.

Sign up now at [www.notredame.startupweekend.org](http://www.notredame.startupweekend.org)!

## *Focus on Regionalism:* Marketing through the Michiana Partnership



Spring has arrived which means just one thing....that Michiana Partnership has been in full swing for one year! We have made a lot of progress in the last 12 months by working together to create and implement a regional marketing and attraction strategy.

Michiana Partnership is a collaboration of the Local Economic Development Organizations, such as MCEDC, from many of the counties within Michiana, as well as the regional utilities and transportation hubs. Our partners share the common goal of spurring the growth of good jobs throughout the region and recognize that together they can offer a broader range of services, benefits, and competitive advantages to better market North Central Indiana on the national and international levels. They also understand that a "win" for any part of the region is, in many ways, a "win" for the entire region.

Last year, Michiana Partnership represented the region at six major industry trade shows (focused on logistics, food processing, orthopedics, life sciences and metal fabricating); held 28 meetings with site selection consultants including sales trips to Dallas, Chicago, Atlanta, and Greenville SC, which resulted in 90 individual site selection contacts; and participated in 20 conferences and networking events with site selection consultants or commercial real estate professionals in attendance. We are forming relationships with the decision-makers and decision-influencers in a company's process to consider (or rule out) a particular area. These efforts, although intended to generate long term results, have already resulted in 11 new leads for the region.

Marshall County's progressive approach to economic development, including collaborative efforts and initiative such as bringing high speed broadband in via the Metronet, construction of a shell building and development of shovel-ready land sites, ensures that the community is well-positioned to land attraction projects when presented with a lead opportunity.

We have started strong, but have a long way to go in the highly competitive world of attracting new jobs and capital investments. With the collaboration and innovation occurring at the local level and the strong regional effort to continue marketing and attraction efforts, our region will gain traction and be "on the radar" more and more frequently for the projects that will bring the desired job growth.

For additional information visit [www.MichianaRegion.com](http://www.MichianaRegion.com).

Written by: Regina Emberton, Executive Director, Michiana Partnership

## *Featured Industrial Property:* 2910 Commerce Drive, Plymouth - PIDCO Commerce Park

### For Sale or Lease - Coming in Fall 2014

Construction of a new manufacturing shell building is scheduled to begin in April and be completed by Fall 2014.

This 45,000 sq. ft. building will sit on an 8.8 acre lot in the PIDCO Commerce Industrial Park located along Pioneer Drive less than one-half mile north of U.S. 30.



### Other key features include:

- Building expandable to 135,000 sq. ft.
- 32' ceiling height
- Zoned for Industrial Uses
- All utilities immediately available
- Additional dark fiber conduit to be installed in 2014
- Pre-approved real property tax abatement
- Located within an Indiana Department of Economic Development state certified Shovel Ready industrial Park



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

*MCEDC Welcomes New Executive Director:*  
Northern Indiana's Manufacturing Corridor Positioning  
for Growth



On March 17, MCEDC announced that Jerry Chavez had been selected to position the county for success in growing the economy. "We are proud to announce that Jerry will take over the responsibilities of executive director. He is a 17 plus year veteran in economic development with a successful business expansion career in Minot, ND, Great Falls, MT and Flagstaff, AZ," says Bill Davis, Chairman of the Board (MCEDC).

New to Marshall County, Chavez is not new to developing initiatives that have led communities to diversifying their local economies. His philosophy in economic development will be led by product development to enhance strategic goals, developing marketing efforts that will allow the County to compete in a competitive environment and to ensure the County's economic development efforts are a success. In his new role, Chavez will further develop an already successful regional effort where communities have come together with the goal of creating more employment opportunities for area residents.

"Briefly, Jerry will be responsible for retaining and expanding the local existing businesses, the attraction of new businesses to the county, working with local entrepreneurs to expand the business base and generally improve the infrastructure necessary for businesses to grow," says Davis.

#### Contact Information

phone: (574) 935-8499  
e-mail: [mail@marshallcountyedc.org](mailto:mail@marshallcountyedc.org)

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