



NEWS from MCEDC

Marshall County Economic Development Corporation

January 2013

Indiana Posts Record Breaking Statewide Economic Development Year

INDIANAPOLIS - The Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) announced that in 2012 it secured job commitments from 256 companies from across the country and around the world that project to create more than 27,600 new jobs, an increase from 19,080 in 2011 and more than any other year on record.



Indiana welcomed commitments for 27,620 new jobs and \$6.41 billion in capital investment in 2012. The new positions, which companies anticipate to hire over the next five years, pay an expected average hourly wage of \$21.77, above the state's current hourly wage of \$19.74. The average amount of state conditional tax incentives offered to companies on a per job basis was \$8,689, down from around \$37,000 in previous administrations. Under the IEDC, state incentives are activated only when new jobs actually occur.

"From its falling corporate tax rate and recently enacted right-to-work legislation to its overall fiscal stability, these results are proof that companies find Indiana one of the most attractive places to create jobs," said Dan Hasler, Secretary of Commerce and chief executive officer of the IEDC.

Indiana continues to garner national accolades for its competitive business climate. In 2012, both Chief Executive magazine and Pollina Corporate rated the Hoosier State best in the Midwest for business and fifth best in the country. Indiana ranks fifth best nationally for business friendliness and seventh for cost of living by CNBC. Area Development magazine also ranked the state eighth in the nation for its business climate and Indiana is one of only nine states to have triple-A credit ratings from all three reporting agencies: Standard & Poor's, Fitch and Moody's.

Excerpts taken from an IEDC press release dated January 4, 2013. .

[Click here for more information about the Indiana Economic Development Corporation](#)

Marshall County Sees Several Employers Expanding and Adding Positions



In 2012, several employers in Marshall County announced expansion projects that included investments in new building additions, manufacturing and research & development equipment, and additional employment.

Such expansions demonstrate that a healthy and diverse local economy remains despite a continuing sluggish rebound in the national economy and in employment growth. The local companies expanding are diverse and range from a food processing facility, to a vinyl & aluminum fence & railing manufacturing, to a wire products manufacturer:

Some of the major announcements made in 2012 include the following:

- **Coleman Cable, Inc.** - wire products; expansion of warehouse facility, manufacturing facility expansion; +\$23 million; 184 new jobs
- **Zentis Food Solutions** - international food processing facility; new manufacturing production equipment & product line; +\$15 million; 67 new jobs
- **Digger Specialties** - vinyl & aluminum fence & railing; manufacturing facility expansion & new production equipment; +\$4 million; 51 new jobs

Other announcements include expansions in manufacturing facilities or investment in equipment at AK Industries, Culver Tool, and Headsight, which total approximately \$5.2 million in investment and an expected 16 new jobs.

Total capital investment in 2012 is estimated at over \$48 million with 318 new jobs created.

MCEDC is proud of our part in these expansions and will be working hard to achieve additional job growth in 2013!

PIDCO Commerce Industrial Park Receives "Shovel Ready" Status

A potential development site located along U.S. 30 four miles west of the crossroads of U.S. 30 and U.S. 31 in Plymouth has received shovel ready certification through the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC). This certification demonstrates that the site owned by the Plymouth Industrial Development Corporation (PIDCO) has a high level of development "readiness" where businesses can quickly locate a new facility.



The 105 acre site, of which 57 acres are shovel ready, is the first in Marshall County to obtain the coveted shovel ready status. It becomes one of only five shovel ready sites in an eight county northern Indiana region including St. Joseph, Elkhart, Kosciusko, Fulton, Pulaski, Starke, and La Porte counties. Throughout Indiana, 85 sites have been certified by the state since the program began in 2006.

As a part of the certification process, extensive research, surveying, and preliminary environmental work were completed including a title commitment, an ALTA and topographic survey, a Phase I environmental site assessment, a wetland delineation, and proof that adequate infrastructure is currently available at the site. The certification will also be used to expedite both the local and state permitting processes for site development.

MCEDC staff coordinated all aspects of preparing and completing the application from obtaining the consulting proposals to compiling all the reports and studies into the more than 630 page application. MCEDC truly appreciates the support and willingness of PIDCO for their investment in demonstrating that their site is ready for development. As the economy continues to rebound, it is imperative that we have sites in Marshall County that can be marketed to site selectors, are readily available, and can be quickly developed. This certification eliminates some of the unknowns faced when developing a site.



The "shovel ready" sites are listed on the IEDC's Site and Building Database at <http://statein.zoomprospector.com/>. This online resource allows site selection

consultants and businesses to research available commercial and industrial properties that are available for quick development and investment.

[Click here for more information on the Indiana Shovel Ready sites program.](#)

Focus on Marshall County Growing Industry: Digger Specialties Expanding in Marshall County

Bremen Vinyl & Aluminum Fence and Rail Producer Expanding

[Digger Specialties, Inc.](#) has begun construction on a new 22,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility located on the east side of Bremen.



The company manufactures vinyl and aluminum fencing and railing. Over their more than 30 year history, it has grown from only 5 employees in 1992 to over 160 today. In 2004, they underwent a major facility expansion and doubled their production space to just under its current 120,000 sq. ft.

When asked why they are located in Marshall County, they mentioned several locational advantages present in the county: 1. An available and educated workforce that did not have to compete with the RV industry workforce in neighboring Elkhart County; 2. Low electric utility rates; and 3. The Midwest work ethic which produces a high quality workforce and a high quality product.

With the 22,000 sq. ft. expansion, the facility will now include over 140,000 sq. ft. of manufacturing and office space. These investments are expected to create approximately 50 additional jobs and will aid in retaining the existing 169 jobs at the facility.

Real and personal property tax abatement applications were approved by the Town of Bremen to support the project. Loren "Digger" Graber, the company's president, expressed appreciation for MCEDC's role in helping facilitate their decision to move forward.

ED 101: Economic Development Workshop Held at Swan Lake Resort

Thank you... to all those that participated in the "Economic Development 101 for Local Elected Officials" workshop held at Swan Lake Resort & Conference Center on November 15th.



This half-day event, which was sponsored by both MCEDC and the Indiana Michigan Power Agency (IMPA), was attended by 25 of our county and municipal elected officials and representatives in addition to most of the MCEDC Board members.

The speaker, Thayr Richey with the

Strategic Development Group (SDG), spoke of how economic development is a team sport, which cannot be done by one individual person. It was also stressed that the communities throughout the county need to come together to accomplish our goals, just like Marshall County needs to work with neighboring counties to elevate our northern Indiana region.

Other topics discussed included marketing, the site selection process, and the use of development incentives available in Indiana such as tax abatements, tax increment financing (TIF), and the County Economic Development Income Tax (CEDIT).

Overall, the workshop was extremely informative, and helpful in generating discussion among our county and municipal representatives.

Purdue's Manufacturing Extension Partnership to Host Several Upcoming Training Courses

MCEDC continues to partner with the Purdue Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) to bring relevant low-cost training opportunities to our business and industries.



Upcoming courses include:

- January 28-29, February 4-5, 11-12 - ***Sigma Six Green Belt Training*** - Warsaw
- January 28-29, February 4-5, 11-12, 18-19, 25-26, March 4-5 - ***Sigma Six Black Belt Training*** - Warsaw
- January 29 - ***Root Cause Analysis*** - South Bend
- February 27 - ***Gage Repeatability & Reproducibility*** - South Bend
- March 19 - ***Risk Management Analysis*** - South Bend

[Click here for more information on Purdue's MEP training opportunities.](#)

Comment from MCEDC's Chairman: MCEDC Looking for New Executive Director

Change is inevitable and this past December, MCEDC embarked on another change with the resignation of Jennifer Laurent as Executive Director. Jennifer built on the advances made by her predecessor, most notably in the area of business retention. As board chairman, I can speak for the board in thanking Jennifer for her accomplishments and wishing her the best in her future endeavors.



We launched a search for a new Executive Director on January 7th. The job description can be found on the MCEDC website [here](#), but there's no way to put into writing the indefinable spark we are seeking. The position of Executive Director of MCEDC is a tough job. The position calls for someone that can sell our county and municipalities with passion, both inside and outside our region, and educate our communities and elected officials on their roles in economic development. All this while managing staff; representing MCEDC locally, regionally, state wide and nationally; addressing local business expansion needs; and addressing the tight deadlines of firms considering relocating here. The position is extremely challenging, but I believe that it can be extremely rewarding as well.

From our initial foray into this search, we have already heard from a diverse and talented group of individuals interested in the position. Applications have come from individuals both local and national. I am excited about the prospect of change and the challenge of moving MCEDC forward.

- Kevin L. Berger
MCEDC Chairman

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