

Ashland Area Council for Economic Development Newsletter

July, 2008

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Dear Nikki,

This edition of our newsletter contains some interesting news from many levels of economic development-State, regional, and local. The State's economic stimulus package is an aggressive approach to creating new, good-paying jobs throughout Ohio. The plan focuses on advanced energy industries, investing in workforce development, and renewing the Clean Ohio Fund. [Click here for an overview of the package.](#) I believe Ashland County and the surrounding region is undertaking some exciting initiatives that align with this statewide vision.

An example on the regional level is North Central Ohio's commitment to a trained workforce that advanced the careers of our citizens, while strengthening our local companies. Inside, we have provided an update on the innovative Training Workers to Advance Grant, including how local manufacturers have benefited. It is our hope that our region not only responds to workforce development opportunities, but also to entirely new industries that can flourish here. Please take note of our article on the Great Lakes Wind Network and how you can participate.

Finally, Ashland County has some great economic development success stories occurring as we speak. We have highlighted a few, including a major Ohio Third Frontier investment with ties to Ashland County. I hope these stories inspire you and make you proud to be in Ashland County, Ohio.

Sincerely,
Evan Scurti
Director

Update--Training Workers to Advance Grant

Harris Welding & Machine Co. and [Ohio Electric Control](#) recently collaborated and received a Training Workers to Advance Grant from the Ashland County committee overseeing Ashland's portion of this State grant to the North Central Ohio region. These state dollars will allow John Kochenderfer, owner and president of Harris Welding, and Bob McMullen, owner and president of Ohio Electric Control, to train a total of 8 employees in the area of basic AutoCAD, a computer-generated drawing system. The money is especially important to train employees with practical knowledge that can be directly applied to the job. "The process was nice and easy," replied Kochenderfer. "It only took me 5 minutes to fill out the application, and then I met with the instructor to discuss the specific training that I was interested in." The Training Workers to Advance Grant will allow Harris

Welding and Ohio Electric Control to become better trained in its area of expertise in order to better serve its customers.

[Hillman Precision](#) is also a recent beneficiary of a Training Workers to Advance Grant. According to Sam Hillman, president of the CNC contract machine shop, Hillman Precision plans to use the state dollars to formally train its employees, as opposed to using on the job training. "We had a need, and this helps out," states Hillman of the grant dollars. "We most likely would have only been able to train 1 employee in each area without it." Hillman Precision looks forward to educating 4 employees with MasterCam training and 2 employees with machine specific training.

The Training Workers to Advance (TWA) is a program for incumbent worker training in Ashland County's many manufacturing facilities. The County has over \$60,000 remaining to distribute in 2008. The County committee can approve grants covering up to 75% of your training costs. Call us today at 419-289-3200 to determine if your training plans qualify for TWA funds.

Company Updates

Congratulations [Bendon Publishing!](#) As reported in the June 10th Times-Gazette, the Ashland children's book publisher has been awarded the 2007 Publisher of the Year award by Levy Home Entertainment, the largest full-service book distributor in the U.S. Bendon continues to lead its industry in both growth and volume, contending with the likes of Disney Publishing and Scholastic Publishing, two Levy finalists. AACED is proud of Bendon's accomplishments, and more specifically, proud of the fact that this company is a prime example of homegrown business leaders competing in the global marketplace from their hometown. You can read more about Bendon at [their web site](#). Best wishes for continued growth!

[Challenge Fastener, Inc.](#) is another homegrown success story. The company was one of 101 Leading EDGE recipients in Northeast Ohio in 2006 and 2007. This prestigious award recognizes middle-market firms making a financial and social impact in their communities. Challenge Fastener continues to gain market share through aggressive sales strategies that utilize local talent, much of which is developed through an innovative internship program with Ashland City Schools. The company is also proud to report that Justin Dodson, son of owners Mark and Linda Dodson will be returning from Naperville, IL to join the family business as a sales executive. Ashland County has witnessed many recent success stories involving family businesses involving the next generation, this is perhaps the best way to sustain the economic base of any community, ensuring jobs and commerce for future generations.

[Keen Pump Co., Inc.](#) has been in operation for 4 years, and in the former Ohio Electric Control facility at 1661 Cleveland Avenue for 7 months. However, owners Gregg Keener and Frank Yuhasz have combined experience of over 50 years in the wastewater pump industry. Keen has shown steady double-digit growth and employs 4 individuals in Ashland. The firm focuses on selling through engineered wastewater distributors that supply complete engineered wastewater systems for the municipal, commercial, industrial and wholesale markets. Congratulations on your expansion in Ashland County and presence here for years to come!

Congratulations to all local firms that have received awards, experienced growth, or accomplished something noteworthy. Please share your stories with us so we can publicize your success!

Great Lakes Wind Network Opportunities for Ashland County Manufacturers to Supply the Wind Turbine Sector

In an effort to promote the rapidly growing wind industry, Great Lakes Wind Network (GLWN) was formed to increase awareness of the opportunities that exist to advance the utilization of this clean and renewable source of electrical energy. " A recent national study reports that the Great Lakes region has the highest potential to supply the 8,000+ components found in today's wind turbine," according to marketing materials released by GLWN. The mission of GLWN is not only to assist its existing network of wind industry manufacturers and suppliers to keep up with market demand, but also to help manufacturers that are interested in entering the wind component market for the first time.

Critical wind turbine components already supplied by the Great Lakes region include castings, machining, bearings, gears, forges, and fabrications. However, GLWN states that more suppliers are needed to keep pace with growth. Opportunities also exist in the areas of composites, controls manufacturing, fabrication, fasteners manufacturing, foundries, machine shops, molding suppliers, power conversion, and steel. AACED will release future notices regarding GLWN's plan to host meetings around Ohio this Summer to discuss wind industry manufacturing. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Ed Weston, Director of Great Lakes Wind Network, at 216-588-1440, ext. 125 or Eweston@wire-net.org.

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