A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

JIM MCBRYDE, MMDC PRESIDENT & CEO

Dear friends,

It's been another exciting year here at MMDC. Not only have we been actively seeking out both new and existing businesses to build and nurture relationships with, but have added new members to our team. We're excited to share with you some of the economic development success stories from the first half of the year. To our continued success!

MEET NEW MMDC TEAM MEMBER, PAM O’LAUGHLIN

Having spent 28 years in the long-term care field, Pam O’Laughlin brought her skills to Clare as the Executive Director of the Clare Area Chamber of Commerce four and a half years ago. During her tenure, she has grown the Chamber base membership by over 30%, has implemented many new programs and has helped countless businesses in the process. Collaboration among many groups has helped get several initiatives off the ground, including Art Alley, which continues to develop.

Pam joins our team as the Clare County Business Services Director, which is a joint position with Middle Michigan Development Corporation & Michigan Works. She will be filling the role Kathy Methner retires from in September.

MIDDLE MICHIGAN BY THE NUMBERS

50 RETENTION VISITS MADE
Since January, MMDC has teamed up with MEDC to make 50 retention visits to local area businesses.

100 NEW JOBS REPORTED
Our visited businesses have reported a net growth of 100 jobs over the past year in Middle Michigan.

+$14M NEW INVESTMENTS REPORTED
New and established businesses are reporting new investments, totaling $14,181,600 so far this year.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS STORIES IN MIDDLE MICHIGAN

Harrison City Manager Invited to Governor Snyder’s State-of-the-Address

The City of Harrison, one of ten communities in the state of Michigan to receive help from Governor Snyder to develop a stronger economic vision, was proud to have Tracy Beadle, City Manager and Clerk, attend the Governor’s State-of-State Address earlier this year. View the full article here.

MMDC Congratulates Michigan State Police on 100 Years of Service

MMDC President and CEO, James McBryde, joined Colonel Kriste Kebby Etue, Director of the Michigan State Police, and First Lieutenant Josh Later, Post Commander of the Houghton Lake post in Lansing this past April for a special celebration of the Michigan State Police and their 100 years of service.

Greg Burkhart Joins Us for our January Breakfast

Greg Burkhart is the managing director of the Duff & Phelps Detroit office where he is the leader of the Business Incentives Advisory Practice.

During our January quarterly meeting, Greg discussed what site selectors are looking for and shared insight on how to attract businesses to the Middle Michigan region.

It was an informative talk that highlighted many ways in which we can continue to enhance our strengths as a community.

MAYOR DUGGAN VISITS MIDDLE MICHIGAN, SHARES DETROIT SUCCESS STORY

More than 220 individuals joined us for our spring breakfast event to hear the Mayor of Detroit, Mike Duggan, share Detroit’s turnaround success story. Highlighting the many ways in which the city has come together, Mike Duggan shared an inspirational message about the importance of economic development.

If you were unable to attend his presentation, you can watch it online.

J. Ranck Electric Helps Light the City of Detroit

Modernization and LED conversion of the street lighting system in Detroit was just one of the examples of improvement made in Detroit and shared during Mayor Mike Duggan’s address. Of the three contractors to work on this project, J. Ranck Electric, a Mt. Pleasant company, installed 8,222 LED light heads and nearly 20 miles of underground and overhead cable during the lighting of Detroit.

Visit J. Ranck Electric’s website for more information on the story.
COMPANY IN FOCUS: AMERICAN MITSUBA

American Mitsuba was established in Mt. Pleasant in 1987 as a joint venture between Mitsuba Corporation of Kiryu City, Japan and Walbro Corporation of Cass City, MI.

American Mitsuba is responsible for developing a variety of products including motorcycle components, nursing care equipment, and car accessories. Their core product line though primarily focuses on electrical components for 4-wheeled vehicles. This includes products like starter motors, electric power steering motors, power window motors, and front wiper systems.

Although there are five American Mitsuba locations throughout the nation, the company has chosen Middle Michigan for its U.S. corporate headquarters.

COMPANY IN FOCUS: ADVANCED BATTERY CONCEPTS

Eight years ago, Advanced Battery Concepts was a small enterprise owner and CEO Dr. Ed Sheffer operated out of his own garage.

Fast forward to 2017 and Advanced Battery Concepts is making waves in the battery manufacturing industry through it’s revolutionary technology GreenSeal(R).

Now located in a 80,000 square foot building in Clare, MI, Advanced Battery Concepts finds itself licensing it’s technology to Johnson Controls, the world’s leading automotive battery manufacturer, and lined up to license to three more companies in the near future.

Also, Advanced Battery Concepts recently was named one of the Top 50 Michigan Companies to Watch at the Michigan Celebrates Small Business Awards Dinner.

For more examples of their success, follow Advanced Battery Concepts on Facebook.
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS STORIES IN MIDDLE MICHIGAN

Three Middle Michigan Businesses Highlighted at this Year's 2017 Small Business Awards
Three local businesses were highlighted at this year’s Celebrate Small Business Gala in Lansing, MI this May. Roz’s Diner, located in Rosebush, MI, was recognized as a Michigan SBDC Regional Best Small Business while Advanced Battery Concepts, located in Clare, MI, and MTW Industries, LLC, located in Mount Pleasant, MI were recognized as two of the 50 top Michigan companies to watch in 2017.

Congratulations to all three of these Middle Michigan Businesses!

Cow Pleasant Dairy, Inc. Wins Award for Energy Efficiency
The opening of a new dairy facility by Weidman-based Cow Pleasant Dairy, Inc. was recognized by Consumers Energy as the Large Commercial Energy Efficiency Project of the Year. The facility, which was designed for the organization's 3,450-cow herd, contains efficient equipment to cool and transport milk directly to tankers for shipment, fans to cool the animals, and LED lighting. These modifications reduce overall energy use and reduces costs. Cow Pleasant Dairy, Inc. also received $117,637 in rebates from Consumers Energy last year.

A press release highlighting this accomplishment can be read here.

The Wildlife Gallery Becomes Largest Taxidermy Tannery in the Nation
The Wildlife Gallery, headquartered in Mt. Pleasant, MI, has become the United States largest taxidermy tannery. Currently, the Wildlife Gallery has two facilities in Michigan, with a third skinning facility and distribution center located in Texas. With a strong commitment to its employees and customers, the Wildlife Gallery has become the tannery of choice for taxidermists across the country.

Consumers Energy Named One of Top 100 Companies to Work for By Forbes
Forbes recently unveiled their list of America’s Best Employers of 2017, featuring Consumers Energy among the top 100 businesses to work for. After surveying 30,000 American workers, Consumers Energy landed at number 62 on the list. Consumers energy provides natural gas and electricity to nearly 6.7 million of Michigan’s 10 million residents in all 68 Lower Peninsula counties. A service center is located in Clare county.

Read the Forbes article to learn more about this honor.
STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS: FINDING SKILLED WORKERS

The skilled trades gap is real - and it’s not just affecting companies here in Middle Michigan. According to the Manpower 2016/2017 Annual Talent Shortage Survey, approximately 40% of employers around the globe are having a difficult time filling positions - a 2% increase from 2015.

According to the same survey, skilled trade employees remain the highest in demand with IT staff, sales representatives, engineers, technicians, and drivers not far behind.

In Middle Michigan, many of our companies have reported similar concerns and for many, partnerships with local schools has proven valuable. Discovering how to nurture learning and inspire students to pursue careers in these areas can also prove essential to ensuring long-term employment.

If your company is struggling to find the talent it needs to support your day to day operations, consider the following:

DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL TECH CENTERS.
Middle Michigan features two area technical schools - Gratiot Isabella Technical Education Center located in Mt. Pleasant and the Clare-Gladwin Career and Technical Education Center located in Harrison. Both locations offer students the opportunity to receive hands-on-training in a variety of trade industries, including but not limited to, construction trades, machine trades, technical drafting, and auto technology and welding.

DISCOVER NEW TALENT AT CMU AND MMCC.
Both CMU and MMCC offer programs that equip students to have the skills necessary to join your organization. From Mid Michigan’s Customized Trainings for Manufacturing and Business to CMU’s School of Engineering and Technology, you can fill employment gaps with internships or connecting with department staff to inform new graduates of open job positions they may be interested in filling.

RECEIVE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING THROUGH MICHIGANWORKS!
If you offer training to your employees or have considered offering it to nurture learning, the Skilled Trades Training Fund (STTF) is a resource you may want to discover. Designed to support employers in training, developing and retaining current employees, you may be eligible to receive a grant that helps support short-term experiences. Contact our office for more information or reach out to MichiganWorks! in either Clare or Isabella County.

BENEFIT FROM THE PURE MICHIGAN CONNECT DATABASE.
You may know that Pure Michigan Connect allows you to post job openings for potential job seekers, but did you know that they also provide a variety of resources to help make the process even easier? Check out their resources here and make your hiring process more efficient.

YOUR MMDC RESOURCE TOOLKIT
At MMDC, one of our primary goals is to help support businesses as they grow. One way we do this is by connecting Middle Michigan businesses with resources available to them throughout our community. If you need assistance finding the right talent for your organization or are looking to provide additional training to the staff you currently have, our website is a great place to get started.

Employer Resources
Whether you are looking to connect with students at Mid-Michigan Community College or want to inquire about incentives for providing on-the-job training through MichiganWorks!, our Employer Resources section of the MMDC website is a great place to get started.

Job Training Resources
Many of the resources highlighted in this newsletter can also be found on our Job Training Resources page. In addition to Central Michigan University and Mid-Michigan Community College, here you’ll find information on our area tech centers and Pure Michigan Talent Connect.