

Welcome Back Home.

LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT: PCED LEADS THE CHARGE

TALENT DEVELOPMENT matters. Companies rely on their employees, and a workforce that lacks the necessary skills limits production and slows growth. Talk of a 'skills gap', laments of unfilled positions, and concerns about forthcoming retirements' opening jobs for which qualified applicants cannot be found dominate board-room conversations, conference presentations, and news reports. In Pulaski County, we're not just talking: we're walking the walk.

Late in the summer of 2013, PCED and Ivy Tech surveyed local employers to determine where lie the greatest employee-training needs. Human-resources and operations personnel began meeting with PCED, Ivy Tech, and WorkOne staff to develop programming and to discuss needs. Nearly fifty employees then participated in two "Communication Skills for Supervisors" courses earlier this year, and as leaves have turned to vibrant reds, oranges, and yellows, the working group has resumed its luncheon conclaves, and classes are underway again.

November brings the first offering of a conflict-resolution course, and a communication-skills class will take place in early December. In between, the working group will reconvene to review the early-November class, to schedule early-2015 sessions, and to receive updates on relevant topics.

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DID YOU KNOW ...

that the Valparaiso-based Regional Development Company can help you to get up to 90-percent financing at a lower interest rate for business growth and expansion?

Contact us to learn more!

Student-business-plan competition underway

Halfway through the fall semester, Brandon Burgess's Business Management students are hard at work on their plans, having received guidance from Ron Gifford of the Northwest Indiana Small Business Development Center (ISBDC), Brad Conn of Concepts Marketing, and Bob Cannedy of the First National Bank of Monterey. Currently, PCED is seeking a local business owner who has been through the business-planning process to answer students' questions to which only someone who has been "in the trenches" can accurately reply. This cohort's business ideas include a microbrewery/pub, a clothing store, and a coffee shop/deli, amongst others.

Entrepreneurship efforts continue

The ISBDC "Launching Your Own Business" workshop held in mid-September at the Pulaski County Public Library - Winamac was a great success, with some twenty attendees guided through a business-readiness self-analysis. Hosting a marketing-your-business workshop next is under consideration.

PCED Executive Director Nathan P. Origer is working with ISBDC on developing an entrepreneurship strategy for Pulaski County based on the results of the late-August Community Entrepreneurship Initiative community assessment.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ...

April Simmermaker and Kari Stout of the *Journal* on the nine awards that they received from the Hoosier State Press Association and the Indiana Newspaper Advertising Executive Association!

Krysten Hinkle, our new assistant at PCED!

Pulaski Memorial Hospital on its role in improving Pulaski County's health-outcomes ranking by nine spots in fewer than two years!

Business Profile: Antares Equipment

What does Winamac, Indiana, have in common with Houston, Texas, and the state of Alabama? While this sounds like the beginning of a corny joke, the answer is that each of these places was instrumental in the creation of Antares Equipment, one of the most exciting new businesses to come to Pulaski County in the past year. Antares is a trailer-manufacturing company that specializes in flatbed and drop-deck trailer models. They came to Pulaski County in the first quarter of 2014 and hit the ground running. I recently sat down with Derrick Dilts, a partner in and operations manager of the company, to find out how such disparate locations could have come together to bring a company to Winamac, and how that company is strengthening the economy of Pulaski County.

Dilts grew up in Winamac, went to high school here, and continues to reside here with his family. A business contact in the trailer industry had encouraged him to create a business selling parts a few years back. After dipping his toes in the industry through that opportunity, he decided to take the plunge into trailer manufacturing in 2013, partnering with Houston-based Antares Holdings and his friend Bobby Horton, an engineer hailing from Alabama. Soon after, he began the search for a location. One of the major requirements that the company had for its site was that it be close to the home of one of its stakeholders. Dilts examined multiple sites in each of the three states, finally settling on Winamac thanks to its proximity to desirable markets, incentives offered by local government, and, most importantly, his family.

Formerly home to Tippecanoe Beverages, the site on the south side of Winamac fit the needs of Antares with its spacious warehouse and adjoining offices. Once necessary modifications were made to the existing space, it allowed them to house the entire operation in the same building. This

permits them to host potential clients and shortens turnaround for orders while forming a cohesive work environment for everyone involved in the operation. Antares entered into an industry with a ready demand for its product, so the biggest challenge that they experienced was ramping up supply quickly enough to suit their clients.

Thanks to Pulaski County's robust economy and low unemployment rate, workers were in short supply. However, many residents of the county have a background in fabrication, so Antares was able to hire employees for their culture fit, and then to train them to adapt their skills to trailer manufacturing. Thanks to their astute hiring, Antares features a supportive, friendly environment where they take care of their employees, and their employees take pride in their work. From sponsoring Little League teams to benefit motorcycle rides, Antares looks out for its own because, as Derrick told me, "Our employees just matter to us. It's that simple."

In addition to its convenient location and workspace, Antares Equipment benefits from partnerships with local companies. They use local transportation for shipping product, buy raw materials locally from companies like JSI Steel, and meet many more of their needs within the immediate vicinity of Pulaski County. Thanks in part to this synergy with local businesses, Antares spends between \$60,000 and \$70,000 each week in the county alone. Since the company currently deals almost exclusively with customers outside of the region, nearly all the money that they spend originates outside of the county, providing additional economic benefit to our residents aside from the expected new jobs and tax revenues. Derrick Dilts and Antares Equipment aren't done growing, and their future, much like that of Pulaski County, is bright.

-T.L.H. II

PC-CARE rail-served-development study completed

At the October PCED meeting, Executive Director Nathan P. Origer presented Territorial Engineering's report on the third and final site considered for the project, a 168-acre plot of land south of Francesville. He reiterated that each location offers strengths and weaknesses, and that the costs of connecting them to infrastructure vary greatly, with a

location on the southeast side of Medaryville offering the least-costly utility-development option.

PCED will investigate options for financing development of one of the sites and then begin conversations with landowners about eventual acquisition.



Sneak peek: the new *Pulaski Online*



Local delays have kept it from going live as early as anticipated, but redevelopment of the Pulaski County Website is finally nearing completion under the supervision of PCED. Our partners Crane + Grey (C+G) have completed all work other than post-review tweaks and the uploading of photographs of Pulaski County events taken by and interviews of local businesses conducted by C+G.

Besides these tasks, all that remains is the local generation of some new content, and then this gorgeous, state-of-the-art “front door” for Pulaski County will replace the old, stale ‘site. Responsive design, parallax scrolling, and ADA compatibility will complement easier navigation, expanded content, and a user-friendlier balance of text, images, and white space.

Better zoning for a better future

Land-use planning has had a tumultuous history in Pulaski County, with concerns about governmental overreach and the sanctity of property rights long trumping efforts to implement zoning and other “growth-management” efforts. Finally, in 2012, after more than a half-decade’s efforts by the Pulaski County Advisory Plan Commission (APC), the County Commissioners adopted a unified development ordinance, making Pulaski County the last in all of Indiana north of I-70 to enable countywide zoning. Though many concerns about land-use regulations are not without merit, this was a positive step for the future of Pulaski County.

And now, two-plus years later, PCED and the APC are partnering to ensure that land use in Pulaski County is governed by rules rooted in best practices in planning, the 2009 comprehensive plan, and deep and abiding respect for our rural culture and heritage.

The County Commissioners, upon a formal recommendation from the APC made after PCED gave the green light, recently approved a proposal from RATIO Architects to

revise the Pulaski County Unified Development Ordinance, which, in the name of fiscal prudence, was originally drafted in-house. An Indianapolis-based firm focused on every level of “place-making” from the big picture of urban design down to interior design, RATIO most recently in our area completed the downtown-revitalization plan for Remington.

Funded by PCED, and in consultation with PCED, the APC, and other key stakeholders, RATIO will correct inconsistencies and fill in gaps in the ordinance; modernize regulations so that the ordinance encourages the most efficient, intelligent, and community-oriented use of our land; and assist us in preserving our productive agricultural lands and natural habitats while creating opportunities for economic growth.

Kicking off in mid-November, the project is expected to be completed by 1 April 2015. The end result will be a user-friendly, graphics-heavy ordinance that balances private-property rights with the common good and provides the flexibility necessary for sustainable economic and community development.

PULASKI COUNTY, HOME TO ...

- the Power from the Past antique-engine-and-tractor show.
- Winter Wonderland and Germanfest
- the Francesville Fall Festival, Monterey Days, Star City Day, the Medaryville Decorating Committee Annual Poker Run, and much more!

**PULASKI COUNTY:
WELCOME BACK HOME.**

Building a stronger workforce

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Building our workforce is not limited to opportunities for incumbent workers. Though not currently as actively, PCED is always investigating resources for the unemployed and underemployed, including Ivy Tech's Certified Production Technician course.

Moreover, a new emphasis has been placed on high-school-level technical-career preparation; PCED Executive Director Nathan P. Origer has been meeting with local educators and administrators, regional workforce professionals, and the working group to discuss the possibility of submitting an application for the Career and Technical Education Curriculum Grant being offered by the State; awarded funds would go toward establishing new trade- and technical-education opportunities, amplifying existing offerings, or both.

Even if a grant is not received, or the proposal not even submitted, this work is still creating the foundation for future expansion of industrial-arts programming aligned with present and anticipated workforce needs. And that is capacity building.

THE PULASKI ONLINE JOB BANK

*IF YOU'RE AN EMPLOYER IN PULASKI COUNTY
LOOKING FOR QUALIFIED LOCAL WORKERS,
THEN CONTACT PCED TO ADD A JOB LISTING,
FREE OF CHARGE, TO THE ONLINE **JOB BANK**.
CHECK IT OUT IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A JOB IN
PULASKI COUNTY, TOO!*

WHY PULASKI COUNTY?

DIVERSIFIED, ENTREPRENEURIAL, AND HERE
TO GROW WITH YOU.



CONTACT PCED @ 574-946-3869, OR VISIT
[HTTP://WWW.PULASKIONLINE.ORG/](http://www.pulaskionline.org/)

Our Mission

Pulaski County Economic Development's mission is to promote and to improve the quality of economic development throughout Pulaski County in pursuit of excellence through the following endeavors:

- *Supporting the expansion and continued investment of Pulaski County businesses.
- *Recruiting new business and industry into Pulaski County.
- *Promoting tourism and the increase of transient spending in Pulaski County.
- *Developing and supporting business services such as workforce development, infrastructure, planning, financial programs, technology initiatives, and entrepreneurial programs.
- *Conducting charitable and educational activities.

**Pulaski County
Community Development Commission/
Economic Development
2014-2015 Leadership**

President: Bill Champion, Fratco
Vice-President: Lawrence Loehmer, Loehmer's
Hardware and Farm Supply
Secretary: David Zeltwanger, DK and Sons, LLC
Membership Officer: vacant
Board member: Andrew Fritz, Fritz Black Sand Farms

Executive Director: Nathan P. Origer
nporiger@pulaskionline.org
Assistant to the Director: Krysten Hinkle
cdcasst@pulaskionline.org

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