



It's the Simple Things.

Economic Development Dispatch

Volume 6, Issue 2: Summer 2017

Building the Industrial Pipeline: Talent Development Begins at Home

JUST ABOUT ANYWHERE you look, you'll find a labor shortage. Unemployment rates have reached impressively low levels, and myriad issues make finding qualified employees amongst those not working a challenge. Even when suitable new hires are to be found, training them to work in a specific new environment can slow production. Not for nothing did Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb recently appoint La Porte Mayor Blair Milo to a newly created cabinet-level position to expand the bureaucracy working to connect talent, training providers, and employers.

In Pulaski County, we need not add another person to the government payroll to develop our talent pool. Through the efforts of the CDC, the Pulaski County Industrial Forum, Ivy Tech, WorkOne/the Center of Workforce Innovations (WO/CWI), and the West Central School Corporation, we're taking matters into our own hands and building a talent pipeline.

In early 2015, we received nearly \$85,000 from the State to develop the Pulaski County Repair and Maintenance Technology ('RAM-Tech') program at West Central High School. After a year

Continued on page 2.

DID YOU KNOW ...

that the Northwest Indiana Small Business Development Center, with a local representative in Knox, provides many free and low-cost services to entrepreneurs and small businesses?

Contact us to learn more!

Compensation Survey Coming Soon

Nearly a year in the works, the 2017 Pulaski County Compensation Survey will soon be distributed to local businesses in all sectors, and potentially to willing, select companies in neighboring counties.

Developed by the Pulaski County Human Resource Group, this comprehensive tool will collect current data regarding wages, benefits, and other perquisites offered by local employers. As responses are received, results will be collated into a user-friendly document. The finished report will be made available to all participating companies and used by the CDC to provide relevant information to prospects considering expansion into Pulaski County.

Available in both print and digital forms, the survey should begin arriving in inboxes and at front desks and counters within the next couple of weeks. Responses will be received through at least late September and into October if necessary.

The Pulaski County Human Resource Group is open to any human-resource professional residing or working in Pulaski County, as well as any individual whose responsibilities include human-resources tasks. To learn more about the group or to ensure that you receive the survey, contact CDC Executive Director Nathan P. Origer at nporiger@pulaskionline.org

CONGRATULATIONS TO ...

Crystal A. Brucker Kocher, newly installed judge of the Pulaski County Superior Court!

the Community Foundation of Pulaski County on twenty years of bettering our community!

the Northern Indiana Power from the Past, Tippy's, Opera House Floral and Gifts and the Chamber, and everyone who participated in an incredibly successful Winamac Power Weekend!

High-School Vocational Program Builds Talent Pipeline from the Ground Up

Continued from page 1.

of working out the kinks and overcoming unexpected faculty changes, we launched RAM-Tech in the fall of 2016. Having anticipated 12 enrollees in the first year, we were thrilled to begin the program with 33 students — 175 percent beyond what we had promised the State.

All but one of these students made it through the year-long Introduction to Advanced Manufacturing class team-taught by teacher Tyler DeMoss and retired engineer Jim Hadley. Of these 32 students, 25 earned six Ivy Tech credits each, for a grand total of 150. We had envisioned that nine pupils would each earn three credits. Our hardworking students collectively earned more than five times as many credits as envisioned.

Twenty-nine of our 32 students tested for Manufacturing Skill Standards Council certification; of them, 14, or 48.28 percent, received an industry-recognized certification in the first year of the program. Some schools have nearly no students accomplish this in the inaugural year (and that rate is a batting average that would impress Ted Williams and Ty Cobb, whose career on-base percentages didn't even quite hit this number).

Of our 32 students (who came from all high-school grade levels), 15 are moving on to Advanced Manufacturing I in the fall semester. A new cohort of five students will be doing a double-block of Introduction to Advanced Manufacturing and Advanced Manufacturing I over the next two semesters; by the end of the current school year, we hope to have 20 students all at the same level of completion. (We don't have more students in the new cohort because, in hopes of making it easier for Winamac students to participate, West Central doubled up on the class time, which made it more difficult for other interested students to fit it into their schedules, and we did not market the program to Warriors early enough. We remain committed

to making this as available to Winamac students as possible — to making it a Pulaski County program —, and recruiting efforts will be amplified this year.)

As students begin their studies, classroom guests from local manufacturers will be speaking to them. They also will have the opportunity to visit plant floors for real-world exposure. While they're learning, our partners will be working on curriculum review so that, once these students have sailed



RAM-Tech co-instructor Jim Hadley lectures students on soft-skills topics during a class in the spring semester.

through Advanced Manufacturing I, the 2018-2019 school year will introduce them to more intensive courses focusing on hydraulics and pneumatics, machining, electrical fabrication, and other skillsets necessary to ensure that our local manufacturers can continue to drive our Pulaski County economy.

But this isn't all that we're doing to build our local talent pipeline!

In space generously offered by Winamac Coil Spring at their Winamac plant, employees of multiple Pulaski County and surrounding-area manufacturers are currently enrolled in a demanding, 18-week electrical-maintenance course. Successful completion of this program will earn

participants nationally recognized credentials issued by the National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS). Conversations regarding offering other NIMS-curriculum courses to local employees are currently underway, too.

Finally, National Manufacturing Day is fast-approaching; the CDC is working with local employers, WO/CWI, and our schools to provide exposure to modern-day manufacturing to our high-school students, and a job fair-cum-business exposition may be hosted in conjunction with these efforts.

In a community like Pulaski County, we have two options: start building our talent pipeline at home, or risk losing our employers to places with a larger workforce.

We don't intend to lose.

"When planning for a year, plant corn. When planning for a decade, plant trees.

When planning for life, train and educate people."

—Chinese proverb from the Guanzi

CDC Cultivating Stronger Relationship with Ag Sector, Planting Seeds for Future Growth

Agriculture is an important part of the Pulaski County economy, and an even more significant part of our culture, yet the CDC has long had a surprisingly lackluster relationship with the agricultural community.

Part of the answer to “Why is that?” has to do with what incentives are available to farm operations, as opposed to what the State allows for manufacturers, as well as how ag policy is structured from Washington on down, but that does not fully explain, and certainly does not justify, the poor relationship. A more important question now is, “How can we change it?”

Recognizing the void that is our presence in county agriculture, we have embarked on a mission to connect.

Over the last couple of years, we have worked on developing the proposed west-side, rail-served industrial park. Dubbed the ‘Pulaski County Center for Agricultural Renewable Energy’, or ‘PC-CARE’, in the 2010 strategic plan, this industrial park, though it would be open to any compatible industry, has always been geared toward ag-related ventures, especially those that create value-added opportunities for our farmers. Progress remains slow, but our intention continues to be to create new avenues for agricultural diversification through industrial expansion.

In 2016, in partnership with Pulaski Memorial Hospital, the Health Department, and a volunteer board, we established the Pulaski County Farmers’ Market (PCFM), for which we currently provide market-master staffing. This has been a great starting point for increased CDC involvement. Giving small-scale farmers, personal gardeners with surpluses, and d.-i.-y. makers an avenue for expressing their talents and growing their businesses, PCFM continues to grow. We greatly appreciate the support that the community has shown for this endeavor, especially the efforts made by Francesville-

area residents to convince us to expand into that town earlier than we had anticipated. While we are meeting goals within this area of the industry, much work remains.

In late July, CDC Executive Director Nathan P. Origer attended Purdue University’s 2017 Industrial Hemp Field Day. Although significant restrictions still force American manufacturers to import hemp for use in production, progress is occurring slowly; given how well hemp’s more potent cousin thrives in our part of Indiana, raising hemp — and perhaps processing it at a facility located inside the PC-CARE — could be a great boon to our local economy. Removing federal legal barriers to growing this all-American crop would be an easy step toward Mak[ing] America, and Pulaski County, Great Again. If it was good enough for George Washington, then surely it has a place in the fields of a community named for another Revolutionary War hero!

Just recently, we hosted our first farmers’ breakfast. We invited local farmers and landowners to join us for a morning meal and conversation and to hear about how to create plans for their estates. We intend to continue this, hosting breakfasts annually, or possibly every six months. With suggestions received from attendees, we have several topics that we are considering for future discussions.

In the typical farming spirit, we are asking, “What else needs to be done?” With constant room for improvement and a disdain for idle hands and sitting still, we are on the hunt for more ways to reach out to and to build relationships with our agriculture community. Help us to help you. Reach out. Call us. Facebook us. We want to know what role you think the CDC can play in Pulaski County’s agricultural economy.

As always, we’re here to grow with you.

— Jessica Wagner, summer intern

“The soil is the great connector of lives, the source and destination of all. It is the healer and restorer and restorer, by which disease passes into health, age into youth, death into life. Without proper care for it we can have no community, because without proper care for it we can have no life.”

—Kentucky poet-farmer Wendell Berry,
The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture

Millennials: Moochers, or Our Future?

Millennials suck.

Surely you've heard that. I'll be honest: I'm a Millennial and I've said it.

We're lazy, impatient, the participation-ribbon generation, lacking respect for our elders, snowflakes, and in a state of arrested development. And, OMG, all of the body art: it's as if we belong to a generation-wide biker gang!

If we'd just suck it up and settle for what's available, we could find jobs and stop "mooching" off our parents — or living in apartments with more roommates than the fire code allows — and grow up.

Or maybe my generation is exactly what places like Pulaski County need to avoid drying up.

I started this disquisition in mid-June in a hotel room in downtown Fort Wayne, where I was attending my professional organization's summer conference. On the previous night, I'd dined with a longtime Facebook friend whom I was meeting in person for the first time, an early Generation X-er and über-Catholic conservative who just relocated from Illinois to Huntington. Dinner conversation explored myriad topics, many relating to the current political climate and cultural issues, and Scott offered some insights that I hadn't expected from a nearly-50-year-old Trump almost-voter: "Give me all the left-wing, sleeve-tattooed Millennials you have!"

Whereas the most recent previous generations embraced and raised their kids on processed foods and drank mass-produced swill-beer, he proceeded, Millennials are driving the growth of scratch-kitchen restaurants, microbreweries (and distilleries), and farmers' markets.

In other words, my entitled, lazy age cohort is demanding a return to a way of life that defined mankind's existence for centuries — millennia, even.

Sure, the emotion-heavy, marketing-driven obsession over organic food, visceral fear of GMOs, and love of overpriced artisanal pickles can be a bit much, but this rejection of cultural standardization that has manifested itself through cookie-cutter cul-de-sac subdivisions, chain-store-parking-lot capitalism, and planned obsolescence is not so much revolutionary as it is reactionary — radical even, given that the root of 'radical' is the Latin *radix*, meaning 'root'. We're just rediscovering our roots.

A conference presenter reiterated Scott's argument the next morning, pointing out that my

generation and the oldest post-Millennials want walkability, diversity, authenticity, rentability, and other "fancy" amenities — things that were pretty commonplace before our post-war transition to auto-centric development patterns and what American writer-activist Norman Mailer described in his 1968 nonfiction novel *The Armies of the Night* as "totalitarian architecture, [...] superhighways, [...] smog, [...] food[, ... and] communications."

These insights, offered by two unconnected persons, reminded me of an obvious, yet oft-neglected, point made in a day-one conference presentation: If you want to attract talent — that is, the right workforce for the jobs that you need to fill or want to have in your community —, then you have to start by keeping your homegrown talent.

If we're not doing the things necessary to retain our own graduates after college, trade school, or the military, then how on earth are we going to attract outsiders, like Millennials whose love of good beer could help to fuel long-term political and civic leadership? (We find good beer in pubs, and, of course, 'pub' is short for 'public house'. Don't many of the best conversations occur over a pint or two?)

So, what's the point of this longwinded defense of my generation? The first is pretty obvious: Pulaski County is on the cusp of a demographic winter, and if we want to avoid such a demise, then we need to do a better job of encouraging our youth to return and of making our community welcoming to other Millennials and post-Millennials willing to establish themselves here. Generally, we should strive to be more welcoming of all newcomers, of any age (Nothing says that we cannot both be a "retirement community" and have a vibrant local economy!), but seeking to appeal to younger adults should be a priority of ours.

The other reason for this screed is to point out all of the efforts to this end already underway.

As part of our Hometown Collaboration Initiative, the CDC developed a tourism strategic plan and established an industry-based tourism advisory council to give us sound guidance as we promote Pulaski County as a destination and seek to enhance and to increase the amenities that make our community a great place to visit — and to call home.

I serve on the Tippecanoe River State Park Access Committee, an outgrowth of the Friends of

Continued on page 5.

Young Residents, Older Ways, and a Path Forward

Continued from page 4.

the Panhandle Pathway dedicated to connecting the Winamac Parkway to our phenomenal state park and helping to stretch our trail from park to park (as in France Park), and beyond.

We continue to provide support for the incipient Pulaski County Farmers' Market as it offers local growers and makers an avenue for their products, creates 'third places' for social engagement, and provides educational opportunities.

I serve on the governing committees of both Wander Our Winamac (WOW!) and Francesville's UpTown project, our two Main Street organizations, and chair WOW's Economic Restructuring Committee, helping to develop policies and programs to breathe new life into our largest downtowns.

We struggled to gain traction, so we put it on the back burner, but we attempted to establish a young professionals' organization and hope to revive it after we've implemented the under-development Leadership Pulaski County program. These efforts are intended to facilitate networking and to cultivate positive future engagement in our community.

When we rewrote Pulaski County's and Winamac's zoning regulations in 2015, we ensured that land-use policies would foster the kind of flexibility that makes it easier and more affordable for tinkerers and their ilk to turn cottage industries into storefront shops into larger factories someday, and that makes downtowns more interesting and diverse places that are eminently walkable — real, natural communities scaled to humans, not to machines.

Pulaski County, undeniably, faces obstacles, the population loss that we've already experienced, our anti-growth income-tax rate, and our limited transportation connectivity amongst them.

Pulaski County also has strong bones, as they say about older homes in disrepair but possessed of so much more charm than most latter-day housing stock; wondrous outdoor amenities; and numerous projects, programs, and organizations working to push us forward. Our potential is endless, but only if we embrace the potential and work together to move our community into the future — and if we consciously welcome those tattooed, beard-growing, flannel-wearing, craft-beer-loving hipsters and the rest of their Millennial peers.

— Nathan P. Origer, Executive Director

Come Uptown and play, Wander and stay: Main Streets moving and shaking

Ever hear about the town that decided to take matters into its own hands and started to revitalize its downtown? What about the county where three-quarters of the municipalities established groups to do just this?

In Francesville, the Uptown Project has been impressively churning out events on a regular basis, with community-gathering opportunities ranging from movie nights to best-burger cook-offs to a Valentine's Day dinner. The energetic and devoted volunteers have also gotten to work on downtown-building murals to bring welcoming art to the community. As a local entrepreneur works toward bringing a new restaurant to Montgomery Street, the Uptown Project has offered more than its share of support, and members have been brainstorming ways to preserve existing business-district retailers.

Across the county, Wander Our Winamac has been building its organizational strength while making investments in downtown. Planters have been installed, and beautifully filled, along the streets; banners are on the way; and the

Economic Restructuring Committee recently hosted an Indiana Small Business Development Center business-launch workshop and is currently conducting a survey of downtown business and building owners to develop a stakeholder-driven vision for the future.

Besides being forward-thinking groups dedicated to bettering their communities, what have these two organizations in common? They're both officially sanctioned Indiana Main Street communities, working under National Main Street guidelines, as conveyed by the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, to revive their core districts.

Up in the northeastern corner of Pulaski County, Monterey, although no Main Street organization has been established, has been benefitting from the work of a recently formed group dedicated to sprucing up downtown and looking to attract new small businesses to their community.

National Observation Allows Economic Drivers to Shine

National Manufacturing Day (MFG Day) is an annual celebration of modern industry meant to inspire the next generation of the workforce; it occurs on the first Friday of October — 6 October this year. Pulaski County's observation of MFG Day will be specifically focused on showing our young adults how manufacturing can be a rewarding career.

Students from Winamac and West Central High Schools will have the opportunity to learn about factories here in Pulaski County, either from representatives from these companies visiting classrooms, or by observing daily operations at production facilities. Multiple employers have expressed their willingness to participate to make MFG Day a success.

MFG Day not only inspires, but helps to dissolve common misconceptions about manufacturing. Many people in America see manufacturing as a career that is second-tier compared to college-educated jobs, thinking of manufacturing jobs as rough, dirty, and labor-intensive. However, changes in processes and decades' worth of technological advances have made production jobs safer, cleaner, and less strenuous — and as the workforce ages, demand for skilled new laborers increases.

Additionally, not everyone that works in manufacturing welds, assembles, or repairs and maintains. Manufacturing provides of all types of job opportunities, such as engineering, computer programming, accounting, sales, and so much more. Whether it is someone with a college degree or someone with a high school diploma, manufacturing businesses are hiring all over!

Below are some statistics about how manufacturing effects our daily lives, our state, and our country.

- 18.5 million U.S. jobs are in manufacturing.
- Manufacturing is the ninth-largest economy in the world.
- 12 percent of the U.S. GDP is from manufacturing.
- 30 percent of Indiana's GDP is from manufacturing.
- Hoosier manufacturing is a \$100-billion annual economy.
- More than 500,000 Hoosier jobs are in manufacturing.



Here in Pulaski County, we are excited to show how much manufacturing benefits our families, friends, and community and cannot wait for the opportunities that will open up for Pulaski County students.

— Hagin Hiatt, summer intern

Sophomore season sees growth for Farmers' Market

The second season of the Pulaski County Farmers' Market (PCFM) is well underway, and after a successful rookie year, we've already expanded to a second location, in Francesville! Our west-side site is at the corner of U.S.-421 and Montgomery Street, in the Agrisol parking lot; we're there on the second and fourth Saturday mornings of the month from 8:00 until noon. We just moved our Winamac site from the train depot to the north courthouse lawn, at the corner of U.S.-35 and Main Street, where we set up on the first, third, and fifth Saturdays.

The number of vendors and variety of goods sold has improved significantly from 2016, with our volunteers working to connect more sellers to the market and to continue the growth for years to come. Recently, we received approval to participate in the Indiana Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, which allows vendors to accept WIC and Senior

Farmers' Market Nutrition Program vouchers. We're currently working on filings required to permit our vendors to accept SNAP vouchers (formerly known as food stamps) in 2018.

PCFM's purpose, first and foremost, is to connect residents with fresh, locally grown produce and handmade crafts and other items made by Pulaski County residents. However, the greater goal of PCFM is to be a partner in our communities, helping to revitalize them; to create new places for gathering and interacting with our neighbors; and to educate about health, nutrition, and gardening.

The Pulaski County Farmers' Market started in Winamac in 2016 and in August 2016 became a nonprofit organization. If you wish to become a vendor, contact cddcasst@pulaskionline.org or 574-946-3869.

— Krysten Hinkle, Project Coordinator

PULASKI COUNTY, HOME TO ...

- Moss Creek and Pond View Golf Courses.
- Shadyhill Speedway.
- Acorn Oaks, Broken Arrow, Rising Sun, and Small Acres USA Horseman's Campgrounds.

**PULASKI COUNTY:
WE LIVE IT. YOU'LL LOVE IT.**

Non-motorized recreational-trail projects moving forward

The CDC recently received word from the Indiana Department of Transportation that permits had been approved for inclusion of State Roads 119 and 143 in the Hometown Collaboration Initiative capstone project, Cranes, Trains, and Pedalmobiles: the Pulaski County Bike Route Network. This final step in various approval processes means that the route mapping can be finished, signs can be printed and installed, and map brochures and online marketing tools can be produced to attract more visitors to our community.

The State Department of Natural Resources recently approved river-etiquette-signage and trash-receptacle cooperative agreements to allow the CDC to move forward with the Adopt-a-River program. Volunteers interested in adopting a river access point (emptying trash, cleaning up sites, *et c.*) should contact the CDC office to sign up.

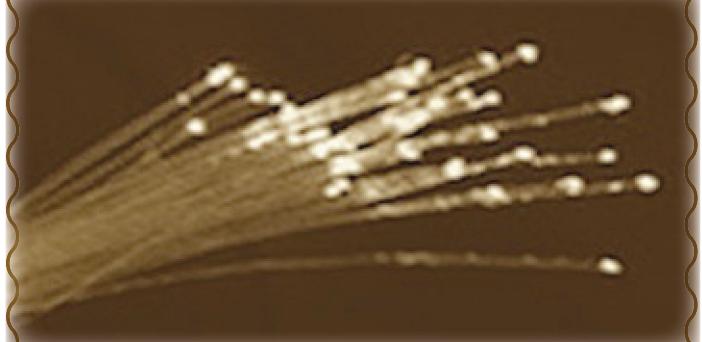
Finally, the Tippecanoe River State Park Access Committee has begun reaching out to property owners to begin working toward extending our wonderful Panhandle Pathway/Winamac Parkway northward to the state park.

THE PULASKI ONLINE JOB BANK

IF YOU'RE AN EMPLOYER IN PULASKI COUNTY LOOKING FOR QUALIFIED LOCAL WORKERS, THEN 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?

THE WINAMAC INDUSTRIAL PARK, WINAMAC, AND PARTS OF OTHER TOWNS ALL HAVE THE FIBER-OPTIC CONNECTIVITY THAT YOU NEED.



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

Our Mission

Pulaski County Economic Development holds to a mission to promote and 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
2015-2016 Leadership*

President: Gregg Malott, Pulaski Memorial Hospital
Vice-President: Annie Scholz, Alliance Bank
Secretary: John Plowman, Town of Winamac
Membership Officer: Doug Roth, County Council/
Winamac Coil Spring
Board member: Lawrence Loehmer, Town of
Monterey/Loehmer's Hardware

Executive Director: Nathan P. Origer
nporiger@pulaskionline.org
Project Coordinator: Krysten L. Hinkle
cdcasst@pulaskionline.org

***Like* us on Facebook:**
<http://www.facebook.com/PCCDC.ED>