



MEDP NewsFlash

Macoupin Economic Development Partnership

Shari Albrecht, Executive Director

April 14, 2010

Courtney Wood, Community Development/Marketing

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New Approaches to Rural Development

Macomb, IL: The economic recession is causing community leaders, especially in rural areas, to take new approaches in trying to stimulate local economic development and job creation because some of the old ways no longer work in the current environment. The Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs (IIRA), located at Western Illinois University, hosted its 21st annual conference in Peoria on March 3-4 to explore new development opportunities and to learn from leaders in other regions who have succeeded with innovative approaches.

Shari Albrecht, Executive Director of Macoupin Economic Development Partnership, participated in the conference along with more than 300 elected officials and community leaders from around Illinois and neighboring states. The conference, keynoted by Governor Pat Quinn, provided an opportunity for participants to learn new strategies to attract businesses and create jobs. It also provided an opportunity for rural Illinois community leaders to discuss difficulties encountered in promoting local development and stemming the outmigration of youth from rural communities.

Highlighting the conference were presentations by Will Lamb, University of North Carolina, who described successful new and innovative approaches taken by communities in southern states to revitalize local economies. These small communities, many in rural areas, have adopted entrepreneurial approaches to stimulate business creation, expand local markets, and otherwise help the local economies.

Kim Huston from Bardstown, Kentucky, author of *Small Town Sexy*, told the group that small towns have assets that cannot be duplicated in larger communities and that these strengths are highly-sought after by younger generations. She worked with community leaders to find and identify these assets as well as market them to potential business investors.

The conference provided opportunities for participants to attend formal presentations but also to work on local issues in small groups. In some instances, this participation will lead to continued collaboration, and ultimately to joint projects or strategies.

“This rural development conference offers an opportunity for elected officials and leaders in small Illinois communities to hear new ideas and approaches. The large turnout shows that community leaders are committed to improving the quality of life in their areas. The IIRA is proud to provide this opportunity for local leaders to learn from their peers on this important issue.” said Christopher D. Merrett, IIRA director.

MEDP Welcomes Courtney Wood as Community Development/Marketing Specialist

Wood to Assist Organization in Highlighting Macoupin County's Growth Opportunities



Macoupin County - The Macoupin Economic Development Partnership (MEDP) announced that Courtney Wood has been named Community Development/Marketing Specialist for the organization. With her knowledge of the local communities and marketing background, Wood will collaborate with key community affiliates in developing and managing programs to promote the economic growth of Macoupin County.

In her new role, Wood will partner with community and business leaders to prepare marketing and revitalization programs for the county and develop social networking groups to provide beneficial social/entrepreneurial outlets. Along with community outreach, Wood's position will include production of MEDP's brochures, websites, advertising and marketing material.

"I am pleased to welcome Courtney and her skillful, energetic and creative spirit to the MEDP team," remarked Shari Albrecht, Executive Director of MEDP. "Her experience and love of Macoupin County will truly strengthen our organization and benefit our county."

A Bunker Hill native, Wood previously served as Managing Editor of Bunker Hill Publications. She received a B.S. in Mass Communications with a minor in Public Relations from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and a Chancellor's Certificate in Electronic Art and Publishing from University of Missouri – St. Louis. While attending SIUE, she studied International Communications in Salzburg, Austria. Wood currently serves on the Macoupin County Tourism Commission.

"I am thrilled to have been given the opportunity to work for MEDP," stated Courtney Wood. "I strongly believe in their mission for Macoupin County and am excited to help them accomplish their goals."

MEDP is a joint venture of both public and private entities across Macoupin County working to create new job and economic development opportunities, promote local economic growth, and provide existing businesses with expansion opportunities and other services. There are two locations to help serve Macoupin County: 18400 Shipman Rd., Carlinville, IL and 111 West Main St, Staunton, IL. For further information or questions please contact Executive Director Shari Albrecht at, (217) 556-8696. MEDP – Come grow with us.

IMEC Launches Recovery Readiness Center

Illinois manufacturers continued to face enormous challenges in re-building from the recession. To stay in business, many companies reduced workforce levels, deferred maintenance on key equipment and delayed investments in improving operational effectiveness. Now, as demand increases, small and mid-sized companies in particular need help preparing to take advantage of the significant growth opportunities that will come with economic recovery.

To facilitate rapid response assistance to companies in key areas, the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center (IMEC) has created the Recovery Readiness Center.

Recovery Readiness Services:

Evaluation – Holistic review of a manufacturer's ability to capitalize on new opportunities.

Recovery Planning – Prioritizing key gaps and developing action plans to address them.

Implementation Assistance – Helping companies overcome gaps and grow.

HOW PREPARED IS YOUR COMPANY?

Take the **FREE** Recovery Readiness Self-Assessment at www.imec.org/RecoveryCenter

Source: IMEC NEWS : MARCH 2010 Volume 3 - Issue 1

FINDING EXPORT ASSISTANCE IN ILLINOIS: INTERNATIONAL MARKET RESEARCH TOOLS

Co-sponsored by: City of Litchfield

This seminar will help businesses, organizations and service providers identify valuable sources of export market information needed to sell successfully in global markets.

THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2010

12:00PM – 2:00PM

CITY OF LITCHFIELD - CITY HALL BUILDING
120 EAST RYDER STREET, LITCHFIELD, IL 62056

Also, learn about:

▶ Local, state and federal programs to assist Illinois exporters

▶ Challenges and potential rewards of selling abroad

Speaker: Silvia Torres, Director, Illinois SBDC International Trade Center, SIUE

Name/Title _____

Company Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

This program has been developed through a partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville as a service to Illinois small businesses.

**Please complete
and send to:**

Campus Box 1107

Edwardsville, IL 62026-1107

Telephone: 618.650.3851 Fax: 618.650.2647

E-mail: International-Trade-Center@siue.edu

Or RSVP to Tonya Flannery at (217) 324-8146 or via e-mail at citygov@litchfieldil.com.

Admission: Free - Space is limited - Registration required



This program has been developed through a partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville as a service to Illinois small businesses.

From the Chairman

Greetings to all of my fellow MEDP members. We have just completed our first year of work, and we have a lot to celebrate! MEDP began its existence with two municipalities and approximately sixteen private members. In this past year, our numbers have grown to eight municipalities and twenty-two private members. That is fantastic, and we hope to see our numbers continue to grow. A formal Strategic Plan was completed and approved, and it will now guide our focus and work plan for the next several years.

A second office for MEDP was provided by the City of Staunton. The office was renovated and opened early in 2010, which now give the Partnership a presence in both the central and southern part of the County, and it provides additional office space for staff. A formal agreement is now in place with a Grant Writer to provide services to our members. The Mayor's Alliance has been organized and is meeting on a quarterly basis. The Alliance provides an excellent opportunity for the leaders of our municipalities to meet and exchange information as well as share resources, which helps strengthen the County and create an environment of cohesion and unity. In addition, the Macoupin County Chamber Alliance has been created, and the Chambers of Commerce throughout the County have begun to meet on a quarterly basis and share ideas and information.

A formal Macoupin County Lobby Day was conducted in May, 2009, and a second Lobby Day is planned for April 21, 2010. These events provide our members with an excellent communication path to our State legislators, and enables the Partnership to call attention to Capital Projects and funding needs for our member municipalities. In addition, the MEDP Executive Director is in ongoing communication with State agencies that provide funding to grant applications that are vital to the County and MEDP members.

MEDP has created formal committees that are functioning well and following the Strategic Work Plan. The Retention Committee is visiting with existing businesses in the County to learn more about their operations and the obstacles they may face or the opportunities they may have to grow. The Recruitment Committee hosted the Night of Networking of March 22nd, which was an excellent opportunity to showcase MEDP, and we hope will lead to new membership opportunities. The Bylaws Committee will begin reviewing the Corporate Bylaws on a routine basis to keep them current and up-to-date. It is our goal that every member of MEDP will have an opportunity to serve on one or more of the committees, so please do not hesitate to speak up and volunteer to join a committee!!

MEDP has added a second employee to the staff. Courtney Wood began work on April 1st and the Community Development/Marketing Coordinator. Courtney has hit the ground running, and she is off to a great start under the direction and mentoring of our Executive Director, Shari Albrecht. In addition, Shari has done an outstanding job this year and has worked so very hard to get MEDP formally organized. She was instrumental in the completion a Strategic Planning process and making sure that we maintain our focus on the scope of work the plan laid out. Without Shari's leadership and hard work, MEDP would not have achieved the accomplishments that have occurred.

Now we have our second year to look forward to. There will be challenges and there will be opportunities. We have a wonderful group of dedicated, knowledgeable and talented members, and we will all work together as a Team to accomplish our goals and help Macoupin County grow stronger. Thank you for your time, hard work and dedication to MEDP, and I look forward to working with all of you throughout 2010.

Susie Campbell
Chairman, MEDP

Night of Networking Held March 22, 2010



**Mike Abrashoff
(left),
Keynote speaker
with gift photo taken
by Macoupin County
Board Chairman
Andy Manar (right).**



**Photos provided by:
Bill Borklund**



**Senator Deanna Demuzio & Jim Pitchford,
Macoupin County Emergency Management**



**A good crowd gathers at The Elks Club
in Carlinville for MEDP's Night of Networking**



Dave Ambrose & Wayne Rosenthal



**Bart Baker, Shipman Elevator and Don Boeckenstedt,
City of Staunton**

Carlinville Featured on Smithsonian website

www.Smithsonian.com Scroll down on home page, click on "Your Kind of Town". Click on "Your Kind of Town" Scroll down to Carlinville feature.

IFB Applauds Extension of Incentives for Ethanol Production

Illinois Farm Bureau expressed gratitude to nine members of the Illinois Congressional delegation for sponsoring a bill that would extend financial incentives for ethanol production.

Congressmen John Shimkus (R-19th) and Earl Pomeroy (D-N.D.) introduced the measure, H.R. 4940. Jerry Costello (D-12th), Danny Davis (D-7th), Timothy Johnson (R-15th), Mark Kirk (R-10th), **Phil Hare (D-17th)**, Bill Foster (D-14th), Debbie Halvorson (D-11th) and **Aaron Schock (R-18th)** are among the 29 co-sponsors of the legislation that would extend the ethanol blenders' tax credit (VEETC) for five years and would also extend a tariff on imported ethanol, also for five years. Both provisions are set to expire in December 2010.

The Volumetric Ethanol Excise Tax Credit (VEETC) is a per-gallon tax credit paid to blenders. In 2009, VEETC credits to blenders totaled \$4.8 billion while the U.S. ethanol industry generated \$8.4 billion in Federal revenue and \$7.5 billion for State and Local governments. It is estimated that extending tax incentives for ethanol production will save 112,000 U.S. jobs and will contribute \$4.2 billion to household incomes in the U.S.

IFB supports the production and use of agricultural-based fuels - supports energy independence and supports market-based solutions to achieve a reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. "Every drop of ethanol produced is one less drop of fuel to be imported," said Philip Nelson, IFB President. In addition, corn-based ethanol achieves a 52% reduction in GHG emissions, compared to gasoline.

It is anticipated that the U.S. will produce 12 billion gallons of ethanol in 2010. The U.S. ethanol industry employs an estimated 400,000 people.

Trade Adjustment Assistance

Up to \$75,000 in federal funds are available for efforts to reverse sales declines and improve growth potential. Eligible manufacturers must demonstrate sales and employment declines due in part to import competition. An application must be completed and filed with the Department of Commerce. Assistance is available for assessing eligibility and preparing the application, at no cost to the company. One eligible, a non-profit organization, like IMEC, helps identify the specific actions that can be taken to improve performance and competitiveness.

For more on the program, contact IMEC's Tucker Kennedy at IMEC, 309-677-4633.

Source: IMEC NEWS : MARCH 2010 Volume 3 - Issue 1

Grab The R&D Tax Credit While You Can

Hit hard by the economic downturn, manufacturers are looking for strategies to enhance cash flow. One that is often overlooked or frequently underutilized is the federal research and development (R&D) tax credit.

While many manufacturers have heard of the credit and thousands claim it every year, there are thousands more who mistakenly believe that they are not eligible or have not fully captured the available credit. It is used by as many as 16,000 companies a year to recover part of their development investment.

It's not just for scientists and technology companies.

The R&D tax credit is commonly perceived as being available only to large companies that employ scientists in white lab coats. In fact, for manufacturers, a wide range of activities may qualify:

- Developing prototypes and patents
- Developing new products or improving the quality, reliability or performance of existing products
- Improving manufacturing production processes

For example, a manufacturer of construction equipment may qualify for developing a new product or improving the efficiency of a production line using automation. So might a developer of agricultural products, a maker of medical devices or a software developer. What is important is not the industry or the product, but how much the company spends on, or resources dedicated to, qualified research activities.

Determining what expenses qualify

The R&D credit applies only to the portion of a company's expenses that are directly related to performing research and development in the United States:

- **Wages for employees engaged in qualifying activities** – If an employee spends 80 percent or more of their time on qualified research and development activities, 100 percent of their wages can be included in the calculation.
- **Materials and supplies that can not be capitalized** – Most equipment that is depreciated would not qualify, but expendable supplies and material would.
- **Contract research** – Generally, 65 percent of the cost can be included, or 75 percent if the research is performed by a university or other qualified research group.

Content provided by Clifton Gunderson

"EXPORT COMPLIANCE SEMINAR"

Co-sponsored by: U.S. Department of Commerce, MidAmerica Airport, LR International, Inc. and Baker & McKenzie LLP

Date: Wednesday, April 28, 2010

Time: 8:00am - 1:00pm (*speakers will be available for one-on-one company consultations after the program*)

Location: MidAmerica St. Louis Airport
9656 Air Terminal Drive. Mascoutah

Post-9/11 counter terrorism has created a more challenging climate for companies to conduct international business successfully. Different federal agencies enforce the rules, the rules themselves change constantly, and, with security and safety concerns top of mind among regulators, penalties for non-compliance are steeper and more common than ever.

This program will address export controls and regulations mandated by the Federal Government including U.S. Bureau of Industry & Security (BIS), U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Treasury Department, and U.S. Department of State. Valuable information will be provided to assist your company in minimizing exposure, liability, and risk in export transactions. It is essential for companies conducting international trade to be in compliance with current export laws.

Main Topics of Discussion:

- ▶ The shipper's export declaration filing via the Automated Export System (AES)
- ▶ Export Administration Regulations (EAR)
- ▶ Controlled commodities</ >
- ▶ Census Foreign Trade Regulations
- ▶ The export license application process
- ▶ Legal implications and penalties
- ▶ Red flags and how to identify them
- ▶ How to conduct due diligence on buyers & their foreign freight forwarders
- ▶ Best practices on creating an effective Export Compliance Management System

Speakers: Ric Frantz, CEO, LR International, Inc., Chicago
Bart McMillan, Partner, Baker & McKenzie LLP, Chicago
Shari Stout, International Trade Specialist, U.S. Department of Commerce, Peoria

Who Should Attend? International trade professionals in the areas of management, trade compliance, business development, contracts, international sales/marketing, shipping/logistics, and documentation.

The fee for the seminar is \$65. \$50 for each additional registration from the same company. Fee includes continental breakfast, lunch and all handout materials. Registration deadline is Wednesday, April 21.

Space is limited and registration is required. To register, please refer to the attached form and fax it to 618-650-2647 or send it via e-mail to International-Trade-Center@siue.edu. If you have any questions, you can contact the International Trade Center at 618-650-3851 or 618-650-2452. You can also download the registration form and agenda via our website at www.siue.edu/ITC under "Events".

"ILLINOIS EXPORT FINANCE SEMINAR"

Co-sponsored by: The Greater Taylorville Chamber of Commerce and the Illinois SBDC International Trade Center at Kaskaskia College

Date: Wednesday, May 19, 2010

Time: 12 noon - 2:30pm

Location: University of Illinois Extension - Auditorium
1120 N. Webster St. Taylorville, Illinois 62568
Fee: Free admission (lunch will be provided) but registration is required.

Learn about trade finance and reducing your international risks to expand your sales with confidence and compete in the challenging global market.

To register, please contact the Greater Taylorville Chamber of Commerce at (217) 824-4919 or via e-mail at fredgtcc@consolidated.net

If you have any questions, you can contact the International Trade Center at 618-650-3851 or 618-650-2452. You can also download the registration forms via our website at www.siu.edu/ITC under "Events".

Come grow with us...Join MEDP

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