

## 2011-2013 HIGHLIGHTS

*The mission of the Erie County Economic Development Corporation (ECEDC) is to facilitate both the creation and retention of jobs within Erie County and is committed to increasing economic opportunities for individuals and businesses through comprehensive economic development programs.*

### PROGRAM UPDATES

#### Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) Program

The BEAR program is designed to improve the local business climate by identifying the concerns and barriers to growth of existing businesses. It relies on continuous communication with existing businesses to capture their thoughts, ideas, concerns, future plans, and insights into the local community. This program also aims at helping businesses become more productive and competitive by addressing areas of concern and referring them to state, local, or federal resources and incentives they may not have otherwise been aware of.

- From 2011-2013, we have made *177 in-person business visitations* through the BEAR program and have provided *75 companies with follow up assistance or referrals*. These companies *employ 10,059 people* in Erie County.
- As an additional component of the BEAR Program, ECEDC has implemented an *annual Business Appreciation Week*. Throughout this week, ECEDC staff and volunteers from partner organizations complete a “blitz” of business visits to hear their suggestions and input for improving the local economy. The purpose of this event is to show appreciation and support for Erie County businesses and to thank them for their contribution to the local economy and community.

#### Regional Incubator for Sustainability and Entrepreneurship (RISE)

The RISE program offers free business development assistance to start-up and existing businesses, such as business plan development, viability analysis, sales and marketing support, employee training, access to capital, and more. RISE is located at BGSU Firelands campus in Huron, OH.

- Since it was established in 2011, RISE has served *75 clients*, 40 start-ups and 35 existing businesses with a total of *221 employees*.

#### Development Projects

From 2011-2013, ECEDC has assisted with business attraction, expansion and retention projects that lead to *\$94.4mm of capital investment, created 544 jobs and retained 4,021 jobs*. Examples of these completed projects include the attraction of Johns Manville and Adrienne’s Gourmet Foods and business expansion and retention projects with Kalahari, Firelands Vending, International Automotive Components, and N2y.

#### Lead Referral Initiative

Through this initiative we share leads, investment opportunities, information about new grants, programs and initiatives etc. with all communities in Erie County to maximize participation in the “bidding” process and to keep stakeholders informed about community and economic development.

- Since implemented in 2011, we have distributed *117 leads* to the community, and consequently submitted *108 Erie County properties* for investment opportunities.

#### Economic Development Task Force

This group consists of various economic development practitioners from Erie County and addresses current development opportunities and shares other economic development related information. The Task Force typically meets bi-monthly.

## 2013 HIGHLIGHTS & DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

### RISEing Entrepreneurs Networking & Speaker Series

RISE launched these quarterly events to bring together our area's small business and entrepreneur community to meet, share ideas, and collaborate. At each event a successful entrepreneur shares his/her success story, tips, and problem solving techniques. These events are meant to connect entrepreneurs to mentors and available resources, as well as make people curious about the possibilities of becoming an entrepreneur.

### Manufacturing Industry Roundtable

ECEDC convened leaders from various local manufacturers to strategically address current and future challenges and opportunities in the industry. Partners from BGSU Firelands, EHOVE, Governor Kasich's office, Ohio Means Jobs Erie County, and the Manufacturing Advocacy and Growth Network (MAGNET) joined in the discussion to introduce resources currently available in our NEO Ecosystem. ECEDC will regularly host manufacturing roundtables to establish a work plan and to ensure local goals are met and regional inclusion is achieved.

### Roundtable with Senator Brown's Office

ECEDC co-hosted a roundtable with the senator and panelists from law enforcement, community organizations, government leaders, and educators to discuss various topics including the Affordable Care Act, workforce development, safety, local, state, and federal funding and their impact on Erie County. ECEDC also joined Senator Brown to visit with Cedar Point's leadership team and to see the Gatekeeper progress.

### Regional Economic Development Training Project

ECEDC and Team NEO spearheaded an effort to develop a formal training program for economic development professionals in Northeast Ohio to ensure practitioners have updated and necessary knowledge, tools, and resources to spur growth in the region. The planning committee partnered with the Cuyahoga Corporate College to conduct a 2-day course on the Consultative Selling Approach to ensure practitioners are best able to meet client expectations and market the advantages of Northeast Ohio.

### Winners of a 2013 Team NEO Economic Development Plus Award

Team NEO's Economic Development Plus Awards honor organizations for a creative and significant contribution to the economic development of Northeast Ohio. ECEDC and the City of Huron won in the category of "Business Expansion/Retention" for our efforts in securing the expansion of International Automotive Components (IAC) at the City of Huron, Erie County location in 2012. RISE was also recognized as a finalist in the category of "Fostering Entrepreneurship".

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
**C O R P O R A T I O N**