

Developments

Helping Employers Retain & Create Quality Jobs Rockford, Illinois USA

Zammuto's Granita To Go National

EIGERlab's GrowthWheel Business Tool Helps Zammuto's Grow

"Zammuto's Drive-In and its lemon granita have been Rockford icons since 1925. We bought it out of foreclosure in 2007 because it would be sad to lose this family-owned business. We're going to take it to the next level, open a sit-down area next door and get the granita into distribution," said Zina Horton, who owns Zammuto's with her daughter, Alida Horton.

Zina Horton uses new tool called GrowthWheel to help double sales and workforce.



Zina has owned **Sweet Ambrosia Desserts and Catering** for 22 years. "I knew at 12 years old that I wanted to become a chef," she revealed. She said that adding Zammuto's was an excellent opportunity.

New Growth Tool Available for Entrepreneurs

She says she will succeed because she uses a business-growth tool that **EIGERlab** and the local **Small Business Development Center (SBDC)** introduced to the Rockford area called GrowthWheel. **Designed for startups and existing companies, the internationally used proprietary system helps small-business owners focus on strengths and weaknesses,**

prioritize, then select one or two areas in which to concentrate. www.growthwheel.com.

"**EIGERlab's GrowthWheel has worksheets in various categories that help us know what needs to be done and what steps to take, no matter what business we're in,**" explained Zina. She's focusing first on human resources as **she plans to double her workforce** with a second Zammuto's.

Brian McIntyre, director of the Illinois Small Business Development Center housed at **EIGERlab** and one of several certified **EIGERlab** GrowthWheel consultants there, said **the tool is ideal for entrepreneurs.** "**Startup people by their very nature tend to**

not follow a traditional business plan. So the EIGERlab's GrowthWheel system lets them focus on a couple of areas that are important to them right now. Once they've taken care of those issues, they move on to the next important areas they've self-identified," he explained.

Plan to Double Sales

Zina predicts her annual sales will double to \$500,000 within two years with the sit-down area and the second Zammuto's. **Joe Zammuto**, the son of the founder, told her before he passed away in 2009, "**My father would have been proud of you guys.**"

Contact Brian at 815.921.2081 or b.mcintyre@rockvalleycollege for more information.

2012 Was Most Aggressive & Fruitful Year for Aerospace

“The Rockford aerospace cluster is starting to gain some recognition as we exhibit,” said Energy Dynamics President Pat Bye. Pat attended the MRO Americas Conference in Dallas (maintenance, repair and overhaul). The precision machining company is a member of the Rockford Area Aerospace Network (RAAN).

“Excellent Leads”

“Our company picked up some excellent leads and we plan to attend the **2013 MRO show** as part of the **RAEDC RAAN group**. When I’m at these shows, I keep talking about **Rockford’s incredibly great supply chain**. I also mention **Woodward, United Technologies Aerospace Systems and GE** which adds credibility to our region. It helps us to be associated with these larger companies as an integral part of the Rockford supply chain. Then the Rockford story starts fitting together for people,” explained Pat.

In addition to the MRO show, **other aerospace events in 2012** included:

- **SEA conference** (Supplier Excellence Alliance), July 24-25, Lincolnshire, Ill.
- **EAA AirVenture** (Experimental Aviation Association), July 21-29, Oshkosh, Wis.
- **Farnborough International Airshow**, July 9-13, Farnborough, England
- **NBAA Convention**, Oct. 30-Nov. 1, Orlando, Fla.

Phenomenal Partnerships

RAEDC Vice President of National Business Development **Eric Voyles** said the public-private partnership that is evident at the RAEDC RAAN booths is phenomenal. “When a visitor sees a representative from the **State of Illinois, the Greater**

Rockford Airport Authority, and a Tier One company at our booth, that helps explain why **Rockford is a great place for them to do business**,” he said.

“Before we began RAAN, we had one aerospace-related lead in 2007. **Going into 2012 we had 15 projects related to aerospace**. Exhibiting at these trade shows is one part of the multi-pronged approach to market Rockford’s aerospace cluster,” explained Voyles.

“Rockford Dominated Farnborough”

Assistant Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity **Dean Seals**, who participated in the Farnborough show said, “**Rockford absolutely**

dominated that trade mission. They closed a lot of good deals and initiated good ones. What distinguished RAEDC from other groups is their **understanding of the entire ecosystem to support an industry, rather than some of the parts**. They look at the supply chain, future workforce and industry trends. That’s what it takes to succeed, that’s why these guys are doing a good job.”

Plan Now to Attend 2013 Shows

Voyles said that 2013 will be equally successful. The booth for the **2013 Paris Air Show** is sold out but there is some space available for companies who want to attend the **MRO show** April 16-13 in Atlanta. Contact him at evoyles@rockfordil.com or **815.969.4256**.

The Illinois Dept. of Commerce & Economic Opportunity provided RAEDC and partners with a new booth for the 2012 Farnborough International Airshow.



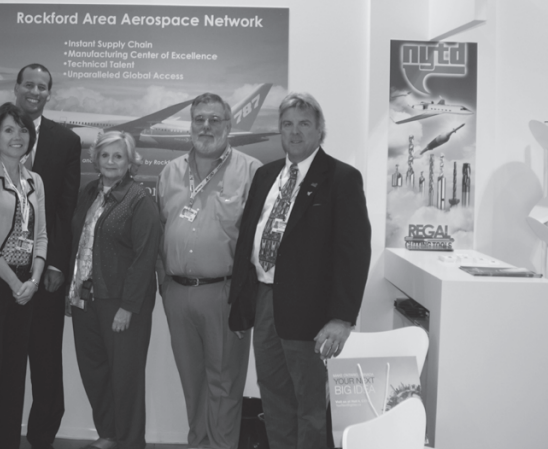
Trade Shows

"...at the trade shows,"
 Conference, April 3-5, 2012
 is an RAEDC investor

Energy Dynamics
 President Pat Bye
 gained excellent
 leads at the
 MRO show.



Rockford:
 our instant supply chain.



Recent 2012 Regional Wins

Many wins have already been featured in the 2012 issues of DEVELOPMENTS. **Here are some more successes from 2012.** All projects benefited from the team efforts of the region's economic development professionals and elected officials. **Each success helps the Rockford area be more robust, improves the quality of life, and leads to more quality jobs and a desirable workforce.**

- **Dial Machine** announced expansion, 18 new jobs
- **DeKalb Implement** invested \$7 million in **John Deere Center**, 20 new jobs
- **Fastenal** added \$1.4 million in new equipment, 25 new jobs
- **Forest City Gear** invested in \$2.5 million expansion, 25 new jobs
- **NCO** won new contract with major bank, 100 new jobs
- **New Breed Logistics** announced \$1 million warehouse expansion, 23 new jobs
- **Regal Cutting Tools** invested in \$4 million expansion, 12 new jobs
- **Rockford Precision Machine** expanded, 10 new jobs
- **SwedishAmerican Health Systems** new **Cancer Center**, 25 new jobs

Please contact the RAEDC if we and our partners can assist you to retain, expand or attract more jobs to the Rockford Region.

Forest City Gear's 8,500 SF expansion is called Roscoe Works. Forest City Gear officials and partners at groundbreaking ceremony.



Getting to Know . . . Joel Sjostrom, RAEDC's New Chairman of the Board

"When you can literally see how the RAEDC's contacts can help a Rockford business grow and expand, it's amazing," recalled Joel Sjostrom of his first Rockford Area Economic Development Council trade mission to Sweden in 2007. *"I saw it happen when Russ Dennis of Leading Edge Hydraulics met hydraulics people on that trade mission and established long-term business relationships with them,"* he said.

"That was a great example of how the RAEDC has helped businesses expand globally. I'm involved with the RAEDC because I know it works," he added.

Will Focus on Hydraulics Cluster

In his new role as chairman of the board, Joel will focus on creating a hydraulics cluster group, similar to the **Rockford Area Aerospace Network (RAAN)**. A cluster of hydraulics companies can collaborate to

increase business opportunities, innovation and productivity, like RAAN.

Joel also wants to establish an education and training pipeline for hydraulics companies, like the **Joint Institute of Engineering & Technology-Aerospace initiative (JIET-A)** does for the regional aerospace industry. **JIET-A increases the aerospace talent pipeline by combining academics, internships and employment into one program.**

Wants to Hear from Businesses

A valuable tool used by the RAEDC is the **Voice of the Customer** survey (VOC), a confidential survey that asks companies what improvements will better facilitate their growth. *"The VOCs are tremendously helpful in identifying challenges, strengths and trends so the region can retain and attract more high-paying jobs that add to the wealth of our community,"* said Joel.

"We really want to hear from our membership and the region's business leaders. What does it take to grow your business? Contact me or any staff member. The VOC is important, but I urge people to contact us at any time," he emphasized.

Joel's Day Job

A product of the Rockford Public Schools 205 and a graduate of Northwestern University, **Joel is the president and chief executive officer of Sjostrom & Sons**, a construction company founded by his grandfather. With a brother, sons and nephews working there, it's a fourth-generation family business that has built many of the region's landmark buildings. He enjoys the satisfaction of putting all the pieces together to get a project done on time. "You have to be patient in some ways and impatient in other ways," he noted.

Family time with his grandchildren ranks high for him. He also makes time for rowing on the Rock River and bicycling around Rockford.



Joel Sjostrom,
new RAEDC
chairman of the
board

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The primary role of the Rockford Area Economic Development Council is to enhance wealth creation in the Rockford Region by marketing the area and helping employers retain and create quality jobs. The RAEDC works closely with many partners to serve as a one-stop resource for clients, to improve the competitiveness of the region and to engage the community in the work of economic development.

For more information on RAEDC programs or services, please call 815.987.8118, e-mail information@rockfordil.com or visit www.rockfordil.com. Please forward to others who share your interest in our region's economic development. Be "green."

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ROCKFORD AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
100 Park Avenue, Suite 100, Rockford, IL 61101 USA
www.rockfordil.com

