

Developments

Helping Employers Retain & Create Quality Jobs Rockford, Illinois USA

Green News!

New Solar-Panel Manufacturing Plant Will Create 200 Green-Tech Jobs

Wanxiang America Corp. plans to break ground this month for its first solar-panel manufacturing plant in the U.S. in Rockford's Global TradePark. Phase 1 will be a 40,000 square foot building and 20 high-tech "green collar" jobs per shift on three shifts. **The goal is 160,000 square feet with 200-plus employees.**

Forty percent of the jobs will be for managers and engineers and the balance for production and assembly workers. The average annual wage or salary will be \$50,000 plus benefits. The company expects to hire full-time employees from the Rockford-area workforce.

After a national search, Wanxiang selected the Rockford area because of local leaders' green vision, according to Daniel Li, project manager for Wanxiang. "Your leaders have a broad vision of going green. We like that," he said.

Important Partnerships

Key participation from many partners helped convince Wanxiang to choose Rockford.

- **Wanxiang** will make a multi-million dollar investment in the facility. It will also lease up to 200 acres on airport property to build one of the largest solar farms in the country.
- **State of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity** will administer incentives and grants valued at an estimated \$2,075,000.
- **City of Rockford and Winnebago County** have committed to purchase \$400,000 in solar panels to use for the water system and Criminal Justice Center.
- The manufacturing plant will be located on 10 acres of the city's industrial park in the **Global TradePark**, a tax increment financing (TIF) district, qualifying it for incentives.



Chinese Consulate Huang Ping and Illinois Governor Pat Quinn at a recent news conference announcing the new solar-panel plant.

Foreign Direct Investment is Key to Grow Out of Recession

"Economic development experts have been telling us that getting 'foreign direct investments' like Wanxiang is one of the best way for us to grow out of this recession," said Janyce Fadden, RAEDC president. "When a foreign company invests in our community, they're bringing in new dollars," she explained.

Quality Leads from Global Conference

"I learned about a State of Illinois loan subsidy program at a session put on by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity," said Mike Abate, president of the local US Bank, who attended the second annual Go Global Conference on April 8-9 at the Clock Tower Resort & Conference Center. *"Plus, we picked up one very strong business possibility and two leads,"* he added.

Many of the more than 150 people who attended the conference felt they benefited. The event was designed to help local manufacturers succeed in the global marketplace and featured international and national speakers and a chance to talk to trade commissioners from more than a dozen countries to learn about the market potential for products and services.

Here are examples of more outcomes:

- **Indonesia Consulate requested more information and meetings** about the Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) and cargo opportunities at the Chicago Rockford International Airport for Indonesian companies. They suggested that other consulates in Chicago should also learn about the FTZ for their respective countries.
- Mayor of Dixon James Burke asked FTZ Administrator Marge Bevers to conduct an **FTZ seminar for government officials & business leaders of Lee and Whiteside Counties** on June 24.
- **The Canadian Consulate invited Ingenium Director of Business Development Greg Crowley to speak** at the 2009 Western Aerospace Alliance Conference in Winnepeg. He made contacts that could lead to business opportunities.



Brandi Hanback, managing director of the Rockefeller Group FTZ Services and a presenter, said the conference "was a model of public-private partnership."

Sept. 2009 Bioenergy Conference in Lidköping Equals Business Opportunities; 2010 in Rockford; Start Now

An efficient way for local entrepreneurs to learn about successful bioenergy technology is to go to the 2009 International Bioenergy Days in Lidköping, Sweden, Sept. 28-30. **Attendees can bring back a product or be a distributor.** Bioenergy refers to renewable energy from biological materials like wood and sugar canes. **Mark Podemski, RAEDC vice president for development,** will be leading a delegation. **Contact him at 815.987.8118, mpodemski@rockfordil.com or visit bioenergydays.com.**

"This is an opportunity for people to turn bioenergy technology into real business opportunities in industries that affect us all, like transportation and heating," said Podemski. *"As we learn more about sustainability, our community can be more competitive.* And, this is a great outgrowth of building strong relationships with our Swedish partners, like the city of Lidköping, with whom Rockford has an Industrial Partnership Agreement, and the Swedish-American Chambers of Commerce.

The international conference will be held in Rockford the following year, September 2010 and expected to attract 500 attendees.



Market Analysis Leads New Company Here; Creates Up To 350 New Jobs

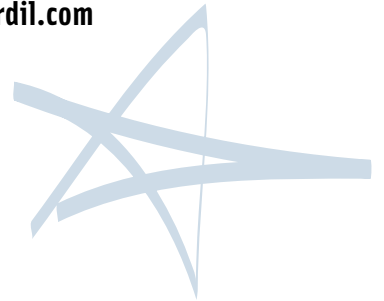
A government services provider will create up to 350 jobs here when it opens a facility on August 1 at 4021 Morsay Drive. Financial Management Services (FMS) will supply **customer service and receivables portfolio-management services to federal and state governments** as well as private-sector clients. Compensation will range from \$30,000 to \$75,000 for entry-level to senior management positions.

Why Rockford? Third-Party Analysis Paved the Way

FMS selected the Rockford area because a **site selector referred them to a study that identified this community as ideal** for customer service/back office/call center operations. The analysis was conducted by Carter & Burgess, an economic development consultant now known as Jacobs Engineering Group. It was commissioned by the Rockford Area Economic Development Council. For more information, **contact Eric Voyles, RAEDC vice president of national business development at 815.987.8118, evoyles@rockfordil.com**



Paul Dodson, director of the FMS Rockford branch, in his temporary office at Rasmussen College in Rockford.



You're Invited to the . . .
RAEDC Second Quarter Event
Wednesday, June 24, 2009
5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Presentation by RAEDC

Giovanni's Restaurant & Convention Center
610 N. Bell School Road, Rockford

RSVP by June 19
815.987.8118
ddorsey@rockfordil.com



Developments is printed on recycled paper. Please do your part to keep our community green.

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!"

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

