

Rockford

I L L I N O I S  U S A

ROCKFORD AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

FIRST QUARTER RESULTS REPORT 2011

Enclosed is a summary of economic development activity for the 1st Quarter of 2011. The collective efforts reported is the work of our region's team of professionals and elected officials attracting and retaining businesses. Please help the Rockford Region celebrate the many successes it has achieved in 2011. Thank you for your continued support of the RAEDC.

Sincerely,

Janyce Fadden, RAEDC President

REGIONAL ECONOMIC STATISTICS

In January, 2011, employment decreased 3.4% in the Rockford MSA (metropolitan statistical area) with 144,964 employed. The only sector to increase from the prior month was financial activities with a 1.7% increase.

Primary employment has increased 1.01% in 2010 over 2009, and secondary and tertiary employment has increased .22% during this same timeframe.

In 2010 2,051 primary jobs (jobs whose goods or services are exported outside the region) were won in our region through attracting, expanding, or retaining employment. This exceeded our goal by 756 jobs in 2010. The first quarter of 2011 brought the commitment of 161 jobs to our region from project wins.

THRIVING BUSINESS CLIMATE

Active assistance was provided to 75 companies, representing 4,358 new & retained jobs, \$278.6 Million in capital investment, and 3.1 Million sq. ft. new or renovated space.

31 **Voice of the Customer** visits were completed in the first quarter of 2011, 47 actions were generated, all of which have been completed.

Two meetings of the **Rockford Area Aerospace Network** (RAAN) were held, presentations on the capabilities of WIB were discussed and the RREDD solicited feedback for its CEDS update.

The first quarter **Manufacturing Coffee Talk** with Mayor Larry Morrissey was hosted at Thermo Fisher Scientific. It was attended by 31 people from 21 companies.

40 companies in the region were invited to attend a **supplier symposium** with Navistar in Lisle. RAEDC Staff and several companies made the trip into Lisle to meet with Senior Navistar leadership and numerous purchasing representatives.

On March 31, the City of Rockford and the City of Lidköping signed a new three-year agreement of cooperation that will lead to new business matchmaking, professional and student exchanges, and best practice sharing.

EIGERlab has been testing an Accelerator concept. A company has been identified that has the potential to expand from 12 to 80 employees over the next four years.

TARGETED MARKETING & RECRUITMENT

A community-wide effort was finalized to attract **Embry-Riddle**. This included developing an extensive client proposal that showcased the research conducted highlighting the Rockford Region as the best choice for their third campus and the extensive community support garnered from the **RocktheAir campaign**.

76 individuals were engaged in familiarization tours of the Rockford Region, including client and prospect meetings.

WORLD CLASS BUSINESS INFRASTRUCTURE

In cooperation with the BA Committee and RAEDC Investor communities, staff is compiling a list of industrial development and redevelopment sites throughout Winnebago County. The property/site list has been prioritized and converted into a call list. The first interview, with the City of Rockford, has been completed.

RREDD co-hosted the MSA's first **Regional Sustainability Summit** in February at NIU-Rockford. With nearly 150 in attendance, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's Executive Director Randy Blankenhorn and Boston Indicators Project's Senior Director Charlotte Kahn gave presentations on the benefits of regional sustainability and measuring a region's economic, social, and environmental wellbeing.

Staff has continued to work on finalizing several grants in process, including working with the staff of the Economic Development Administration on finalizing an economic adjustment grant application.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

All seven students that went through the first **TechWorks training** class are either employed or have job offers. 71 people have requested to be part of the orientation for the next class.

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

The **Rockforward! Leadership Council** funded \$75,000 of the \$175,000 2011 Emerging Opportunities Fund to assist in securing Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Winnebago County contributed an additional \$25,000 for this same purpose.

FIRST QUARTER 2011 PROJECT WINS



American Aluminum Extrusion Company announced they will occupy a 277,000 sq. ft. vacant facility in Roscoe, IL. Job creation is expected to exceed 120. The RAEDC helped the Village of Roscoe create a strategy that will bring over \$750,000 to this project from the state of Illinois for infrastructure support.

Illinois Growth Dimensions and a partner agency located a call center into the EIGERlab, job creation should exceed 30 employees.

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced the selection of a site for its new primary-care clinic. The 30,000 sq. ft. clinic is expected to open in 2012, and will be located on Featherstone Road in Rockford.

Lyonscg, an e-commerce company, signed a lease at EIGERlab, and will create over six new positions in 2011.

FIRST QUARTER 2011 HIGHLIGHTS



The RAEDC assisted in the planning of the **City of Rockford's** hosting of Dr. Lu, Chairman of Wanxiang Group, and his delegation. Opportunities were discussed for future mutually beneficial collaboration.

The proposal for **Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University** (ERAU) was finalized and sent to the ERAU selections committee prior to their March Trustees meeting.

Over 100 business and community leaders attended the **First Quarter Event** which featured an economic development trade show highlighting the work of the RAEDC.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Start-Up Accelerator; Saturday, April 30; 10 a.m. @ EIGERlab

Tri-State Alliance Summit; Monday, May 9; 8:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. @ Radisson
Keynote Speaker: Representative John Mica

Manufacturing Coffee Talk with Mayor Morrissey; Tuesday, May 24; 7 to 9 a.m. @ J&M Plating

For more information on upcoming events, visit www.rockfordil.com.

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