



2014 Annual Report of the

Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce and Lawrence Economic Development Corporation



Greater
Lawrence County
Chamber of Commerce



Message From Your Executive Director



Bill Dingus, Executive Director

The last decade of growth for LEDC has provided an economic upward movement unmatched in Ohio with a 2000% growth in assets. Lawrence County's progressive accomplishments allowed it to close 2014 with a December unemployment rate reaching down to 4.7%, a rate that had not been seen for many years.

My 2013 report opened talking about the need to look at economic development through a view of many years. 2014 emphasizes the truth of that stand as the steadily increasing growth pattern of Ironton and Lawrence County continued. As stressed in previous years, I believe that much of our County's economic success is the

result of true public-private partnerships. Elected officials and their representatives work hand-in-hand with private leadership to move our community forward. I am privileged to be Executive Director of LEDC, and in that position, I realize the success of Lawrence County belongs to the many partners including County Commissioners, Mayors, Trustees, Councilmen, corporate and business leaders including manufacturing and banking industries, and hundreds of volunteers, some directly helping LEDC and others making their community event and the community as a whole a success.

2014 was a great year and many projects that had been in planning for nearly a decade came together. The new bridge connecting Ironton to US 23 near Russell made great strides as it moves toward a 2016 completion. Ribbons were cut as a new 79 room Holiday Inn Express in Ironton opened for business. The Big Boy Entrance sign smiled brightly and stood tall welcoming Tri-State residents to the area's only Frisch's Big Boy setting national new-opening

records. At the Point Industrial Park, JennMar-McSweeney opened with many new jobs for the region. Additionally, Ken API and Excel Scaffolding opened to serve the growing construction markets of the region. Ground was broken for a new American Electric Power facility scheduled to open this month, and a new logistics center for Bimbo Bakeries is under roof as 2014 comes to a close.

A true bright spot of 2014 was the gathering of local, Ohio, and national leaders to join Ohio Lt. Governor Mary Taylor in dedicating the Port of South Point to serve the logistics needs of Southern Ohio and the Tri-State region. As the Lt. Gov. Taylor delivered her address, a train passed along the Eastern edge of the Port loaded double stacked with containers and in the background a full tow, 15 barges and a tow boat, passed loaded with freight and bulk product.

Eastern Lawrence County saw growth in the opening of a new St. Marys/CAO medical facility next to Fairland East, a new Cabell Huntington Clinic across from the Lawrence

County Fairgrounds, a new Wyngate Senior Living Center, and a number of new small businesses. Additionally, Proctorville opened a new Village Hall and South Point approved the purchase of a new building to embrace 2015 as a new Village Center.

Other positive elements of 2014 were the formalization of a plan to build a bypass around Portsmouth bringing our community 15 minutes closer to the State Capital and simultaneously, ODOT in De-

ember recommended \$5 million dollars to jump-start the movement of the Chesapeake Bypass, Tri-State Outer-belt. This allocation will be the first Ohio ODOT funds committed to this project as the previous funds came largely from US Congressional line items. These major transportation projects are part of plans that have come together over the last twenty to thirty years.

All the LEDC team, the LEDC Board, and all the employees

appreciate the tremendous support received during 2014 from both the public and private sectors and look forward to a fruitful 2015.

Sincerely,



Bill Dingus
Executive Director

Financial Status from our CFO

Combined assets of the Lawrence Economic Development Corporation and the Greater Lawrence County Area Chamber of Commerce exceeded \$41,800,000 in 2014, a 103% increase over the last five years! The agencies began operations in 1983 with a few thousand dollars and a goal for economic recovery for our region, and thanks to the dedication of area leaders our growth has been phenomenal!

The rapid growth of our agencies demand effective and accurate accounting, and

the completion of annual audits with no findings for the last 5 years has helped to ensure that compliance. Also, current and scheduled construction activity in the Industrial Park and at the river dock point to a promising future!



Phil Ramsey,

Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

Board of Directors 2013-2014

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Casey Baker,

External Vice President
Massie Schemmel,

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Julie Terry,
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Tim Parnell

Ted Edwards

Message from 2014 President Larry Anderson

What a year it has been, the last 12 months have flown by and it's hard to believe that I am now the past president of the Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce. There have been so many exciting things happen it is hard to remember each and every event.

Our annual legislative day in Columbus was a huge success with a bus load of individuals heading to Columbus to have one-on-one meetings with different department heads concerning issues that affect the residents of Lawrence County.

The fundraiser with Jim Thornton, the voice of the Wheel of Fortune, was an evening enjoyed by all the people that were in attendance. There was a lot of fun and laughs as people took their turn spinning the wheel trying to win prizes. This fundraiser helps raise money in order to give \$500.00 Scholarships to each of the Lawrence County Schools including the Collins Career Center.

The dedication of the new dock and the continued growth of the Pointe was, in my opinion, the biggest plus for the year. With each new business comes the opportunity to have more Tri-State people working at good jobs and having more disposable income to spend to continue other employment opportunities.

The awards dinner was again highlighting the people and businesses that make Lawrence County a great place to live and work. My hats off to each and every one of the award winners, saying thank you for your part in making Lawrence County shine.

As I sit back in my rocking chair watching football. Those who know me, know that I can't sit still for very long. I am looking forward to seeing what this coming year brings to each and every member of the Chamber.

Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce Annual Report

Fourth Friday Luncheons

The first luncheon for 2014 was held at the Knights of Columbus in Ironton on January 28th. Speakers were Glenda Bumgarner, Deputy Director of the



Office of Jobs and Commerce, a division within the Ohio

Department of Transportation, and Chris Schmenk, President of Argus Growth Consultants and consultant to the law firm of Bricker & Eckler.

February Luncheon was held at Ohio University Proctorville Center on February 28. Guest speaker was Ken Boldman, Supervisor of Customer Service and Marketing for the Chillicothe and Columbus regions of AEP Ohio.

March luncheon was held at Ohio University Proctorville Center on March 28. Guest speaker was Stacie Stoll, Director of Sales & Marketing at Wyngate at RiversEdge, the new senior citizens complex in Proctorville.



June luncheon was held at the Knights of Columbus

in Ironton on June 27. Guest Speaker was Kristi Arrowood, Manager, and Cabell Huntington Hospital Foundation. Kristi spoke about the new Children's Hospital that has opened in Huntington.

September luncheon was held at the Ohio University Proctorville Center on September 26. Guest speaker was Erin MacLellan, Public Information Officer with the Public Utilities commission of Ohio.



October 4th Friday Luncheon was held at the Knights of Columbus in Ironton on October 24. Guest speakers were Lenore Mason and Mary May with Goodwill Industries.

All of these luncheons were very well attended with approximately 60 members present.



Spotlight Dinner – April 24

More than 300 people attended the Chamber Spotlight Dinner and Reception on Thursday, April 24 at South Point High School Theater/Auditorium with Jim Thornton as guest speaker.

Jim, the voice of the Wheel of Fortune, graduated from



Huntington High School in 1983 and began his broadcasting career at WOWK-TV. In 1984, he moved to California and worked numerous radio and television jobs. In 2011 Jim became the announcer of Wheel of Fortune in the show's 29th season.

CHAMBER EVENTS

The dinner and auction was a fund raising event for the Chamber with much of the proceeds going to scholarships for area high school seniors. The chamber also presented a check for \$2,500 to the SIMMs Creek Restoration Committee.

Legislative Day – May 13

The Chamber of Commerce sponsored its annual Legislative Day on Tuesday, May 13th. A chartered motor coach departed Ironton Hills Plaza at 7 a.m. for the trip to the State Capitol



in Columbus. The group was greeted by State Legislators before the breakout sessions began. Breakout sessions were Transportation facilitated by Ralph Kline and Jeremy Clay; Economic Development facili-



tated by Carl Darling and Viviane Vallance; and Workforce Development facilitated by Dr. Scott Howard. At noon approximately 70 people from Lawrence County, including students from the various high schools, enjoyed lunch at the Governor’s Mansion with guest speaker, Joy Padgett. After lunch Senator Joe Uecker, Senator Bob Peterson, Representative Terry Johnson, Representative Ryan Smith, Lawrence County Commissioners Les Boggs and Bill Pratt greeted the group. Tours of the Governor’s Mansion were conducted by their staff.



Recipients of the High School Scholarship Awards – May
The members of the Chamber

Board of Directors visited each high school awards ceremony or graduation and presented a graduating senior with a scholarship of \$500.00. Criteria for the scholarships include:
Grade Point Average
Financial Need
Community Service

July 29 Dr. Pennington Reception

July 29, the Chamber hosted a work day and dinner/reception welcoming Dr. Nicole Penning as Dean of Ohio University Southern. Dr. Pennington met with the LEDC and Chamber



staff, then met with the LEDC Board and had dinner. After dinner a reception and ice cream social was held with guests invited from Ohio University Southern, the Chamber and other organizations in the county.

Business After Hours
Wyngate at RiversEdge and the Chamber hosted a Business

CHAMBER EVENTS

after Hours on September 25 at their new facility in Proctorville Ohio. The event was a huge success with over 40 Chamber members attending. Live harp music filled the dining room and private tours were given.

Public Forum

The Chamber sponsored a Candidates Forum on October 21 at the Ohio University Southern, Bowman Auditorium with Doug Korstanje as moderator. Candidates attending were:



U.S. Congressman Bill Johnson, Jennifer Garrison and Dennis Lambert; Representative Ryan Smith and Josh Bailey; Commissioner Freddie Hayes, Jr. and Tim Edwards. Auditor Jason Stephens also greeted those attending.

Seminar on Affordable Care Act

The Chamber partnered with The Ohio State University, Ohio Small Business Development Centers, and the Small Business

Administration to conduct an Affordable Care Act Seminar (also known as Obama Care) at the Chamber Building on October 28. Rick Patrick of Patrick Consulting Group spoke to small business owners and answered questions regarding their concerns with the Affordable Care Act.

Annual Awards Dinner

The Annual Awards Dinner was held on Thursday, November 6, 2014. More than 200 attended the dinner at Ohio University Southern in Ironton.

Awards presented were: Small business Advocate, Weber's Florist and Gifts; Entrepreneur of the Year, Ironton Frisch's Big Boy; Business of the Year, Glockner South Point Ford; Young Professional of the Year, Katie McKnight and the George Patterson Community Servant of the year, Doug Korstanje.

New officers were installed for 2015, they are: Rachel Sargent Bess, President; Casey Baker, Internal Vice President; Massie Schemmel, External Vice President; Julie Terry, Secretary; and Tony Payne, Treasurer. Larry Anderson will continue on the Board as Past President.



Lawrence Economic Development Corporation

The Lawrence Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) was established in August of 1983 to address the economic needs of Lawrence County, Ohio. The LEDC was one of the first economic development agencies to recognize the value of consolidation of resources under one agency umbrella. As a result of the coordinated efforts of the community leaders, the Greater Lawrence County Area Chamber of Commerce (The Chamber) was created with the merger of two small volunteer organizations and joined the LEDC in a single, centrally located facility in South Point, Ohio. The two organizations maintained their separate identities as single incorporated agencies with the Chamber serving the needs of existing business and industries and the LEDC providing the services necessary to recruit and retain industry and business. The agencies' services complement one another and during the past 27 years of continuous service, the consolidated agency has proven to have great merit in the Appalachian county. It is from this joint agency that multiple services

are provided. The cost effective, professional operation attracted the attention of the Tri-State community and was a contributing factor in the City of Ironton, Ohio and City of Huntington, West Virginia applying for, and receiving, an Urban Empowerment Zone designation.

The Executive Director and the staff of the LEDC served on numerous state and local committees and functions during 2013, including, but not limited to the following:

- Chamber of Commerce Executives of Ohio
- Community Action Organization Board
- Sunoco Citizen Advisory Panel
- Empowerment Zone Executive Board
- Foundation for Appalachia Ohio
- Institute for Local Government Administration and Rural Development
- KYOVA Planning Commission
- Lawrence County Department of Jobs and Family Services
- Lawrence County Planning Commission
- Lawrence County Port Authority
- Leadership Tri-State

- Ohio Economic Development Association
- Ohio Rural Development Partnership
- Ohio Valley Regional Development Council (OVRDC) Nominating Committee
- OVRDC Caucus
- Region 7 Advisory Board
- Transportation Review and Advisory Council
- Workforce Development Resource Board
- The LEDC and its staff was actively involved in many local activities including, but not limited to:
- Charitable City Missions Fund
- Chesapeake Lions Club
- Development of Inland River port
- Development of The Point Industrial Park
- Empowerment Zone
- Friends of Ironton Community Service Organization
- Ironton Lions Club
- Ironton Rotary Club
- Ironton In Bloom
- Lawrence County Planning Commission
- Legislative Committee
- Monthly Chamber Membership Functions
- Natural Resources Committee
- Ohio Rural Development Partnership

Retention and Expansion Committee
 Transportation Committee
 Tri-State Airport Board
 Tri-State Regional Airport
 US-China Economic Development and Trade Council
 Workforce Development
 Workforce Development Planning and Strategies Committee

LEDC staff continues to remain active with the Region 7 Advisory Commission and through

the continued partnership with the Ohio Department of Development, has played a major role in the attraction of new businesses, as well as the expansion of existing industries. LEDC has valued the excellent support from our federal and state legislators. The legislators have been outstanding economic development supporters, and Lawrence County has benefited

greatly by their active participation in this district.

For more information regarding LEDC, please contact:

Bill Dingus, Executive Director
 dingus@ohio.edu

Viviane Vallance, Associate Executive Director
 viviane@ledcorp.org



2014 Milestones

Through a partnership with the Ironton City Council, mayor and former Ironton Port Authority, The Lawrence Economic Development Corporation took special focus on the City of Ironton in 2014 with developments in manufacturing, retail, and residential industries. As the economic development authority for the entire county, it was a great pleasure to bring to fruition the projects noted below.

The Gateway Center:

Seeing a need for hotel/motel de-



velopment, LEDC and the Lawrence County Community Action Organization were major players in initializing investments into the construction of the new hotel at the Gateway



Center on 9th Street. Along with the hotel, the entire site is now shovel ready and LEDC is actively seeking tenants and developers for the remaining footprint.

Ironton Industrial Park:

As of early 2014, LEDC took the lead in completing the long awaited roadway construction through the Ironton Industrial



Park. This project now gives distribution trucks a safe route to Liebert Corporation and opens the entire industrial park for access to more developable sites within the main footprint.



Swift Manufacturing has also increased production and doubled in size with a new building since this roadway development. LEDC also sold, purchased, and redeveloped several sites including the old Ironton Steel property, the old Wolohan building and site, and the front lot of the Ironton Industrial Park. These efforts have resulted in new companies including, Bulk Liquid Transport with the creation of nearly 20 new jobs and several more in the works that will break ground in 2015.



Downtown Developments:

LEDC, in partnership with CAO and the City of Ironton, has laid out the plans for new loft apartments in the old Brumberg Building between 2nd and 3rd streets of Downtown Ironton. In 2014, all inspections were completed for development and the LEDC team began renovation of the building with plans for completion in 2015. The building will house 1 and 2 bedroom loft style apartments on the upper floors

and retail development on the first floor.

2015:

Several projects already in play for 2015 consists of the completion of the gas stations tank removal and clean-up at Lorain Street, the development of the loft apartments in the old Brumberg building, continued development of the Ironton Industrial Park-including the construction of shell buildings, and continued site work and recruitment for the Ironton Gateway Center off of 9th Street.

Efforts will continue in marketing the community in partnership with the Friends of Ironton and in advocating business growth.



2014 Board of Trustees

Executive Board:

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Vice President
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Dan Evans,
2nd Vice President
Doug Korstanje,
2nd Secretary
Gordon Waters,
2nd Treasurer
Larry Anderson,
Chamber Representative

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Carl Grover
D. R. Gossett
Dan Jeffries
Don Edwards
John Essman
John Galloway
Keith Molihan
Matt Manns
Mike Haas
Rick Griffith
Sandy Blackburn
Steve Dodgion
Jack Dingess

Elected Officials:

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Les Boggs
Freddie Hayes, Jr.
Richard Dunfee
Chris Davidson
Dick Gilpin
Gary Simpson
Larry McDaniel
Ronald West
Rich Blankenship
Robert Blankenship
Jason Stevens
Doug Cade
Terry Porter

The Point Industrial Park

The goals of LEDC include job creation and retention, industrial development and assistance in community enhancement projects. Over the past few years, LEDC has made great strides in attaining these goals, not only for Lawrence County, but also for the entire Tri-State Area. The expansion and development of The Point Industrial Park is an excellent example of this growth. During 2014, The Point has been alive with activity with new buildings rising, recent tenants settling in, and existing businesses prospering. Even the casual visitor or tourist passing by on Route 52 can witness the new life as the shell of the new Bimbo facility rises at the entrance to the park, while bulldozers level and fill the plot along the highway, and tractor trailers, construction vehicles and FedEx trucks form a constant stream of traffic in and out of the park.



LEDC has continued its progressive development of spec buildings. To date, Spec Buildings One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven

and Eight have been completed and currently house successful companies. At present, the park is home to fourteen businesses: Engines Inc of Ohio, Mid Valley Supply, Calgon Carbon, Applied Technologies, Merciers Inc., Liebert Corporation, PRD Technologies Inc, R & W Rental and Supply, Orica, Intermountain Electronics, Fed Ex, JennMar-McSweeney's, Excel Modular Scaffold and Leasing, and Ken API.

One of the newest businesses in The Point is Excel Modular Scaffold and Leasing. Excel is a leader in the manufacturing and



erection of specialized scaffolding. Throughout the course of its history, Excel scaffolding has developed a strong following of loyal customers in the nuclear, petrochemical and chemical plant industries. In March, LEDC completed the 30,000 square foot facility, which houses a 2,000 square foot office block and a 10-ton crane. Excel moved in and began its operations mid-2014.

Ken API completed their new facility in June of this year. Ken API

is a distributor of drywall, metal studs, and numerous other construction materials. They were looking to consolidate their Chesapeake and Ashland locations into one large 30,000 square foot facility and The Point provided the ideal location. The new facility allows them to buy drywall in bulk and bring it in by rail car and then to distribute it throughout the region.

A major highlight of 2014 was the August dedication and opening of The Port of South Point with its dock and inter-modal facility along the Ohio River. The Lieutenant Governor was the keynote speaker and other state and local representatives as well as many



Tri-State residents enjoyed the opening ceremonies and the fellowship that followed. This project was broken down into two



major pieces. The first was the rehabilitation of one of the existing million gallon tanks that had been out of service since 1996. This tank connects the industrial park to the riverfront allowing transfer of bulk liquid products. The project was completed last December.



The second phase of the project involved the construction of a sheet pile dock along the Ohio River designed to facilitate moving large items from the river to either truck or rail. With the completion of the port, we are the only public port on the Ohio River between Wellsville, Ohio and the Indiana border. This positions us to become a major player in the global market place. This dock took 5 years to complete and spans one hundred feet of river frontage allowing three barges to be parked and loaded simultaneously. The dock

has a pad area where a large crane, which can lift up to 300 tons, will offload cargo. Superior Marine has agreed to manage this facility and will oversee the unloading of goods from barge to road by boom crane or other appropriate methods. The dock will complement the existing rail transfer facility, thus providing companies within The Point and throughout the Tri-State area the capability to ship product by all three modes of transportation. As the demand for waterway shipping increases, our port and industrial park will be more and more appealing to businesses looking to relocate or expand into or near our facilities.



LEDC and the Lawrence County Port Authority have already secured general Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) status for The Point. This status allows foreign products to be stored or serviced in the park with no tariff fee. FTZ status along with complete inter-modal access will afford local businesses a competitive advantage. LEDC's long-term vision includes the possibility of constructing another river dock with a larger crane as more industries recognize the value of cutting shipping costs through the use of

our inter-modal facility.

In August LEDC started construction of a new facility for Bimbo Bakeries USA. Bimbo is the parent company for many brands of baked goods well known to most Americans, like *Arnold*, *Entenmann's*, *Sara Lee*, and *Thomas'* to name just a few. The new 43,000 square foot facility will serve as the distribution facility for the company and will deliver goods as far away as Virginia.

AEP is also building a new site for its Lawrence County service center within The Point. They anticipate completion by early 2015.

Future plans include the construction of a new spec building, which we hope to have completed by mid-June 2015. We also have our sights on a new building along the river to serve the dock and provide additional meeting rooms for the area. Furthermore, aggressive marketing strategies are underway to lease the former M & M Building and bring other interested businesses and jobs to The Point. We are excited about the progress being made to transform The Point into a premiere industrial park for the State of Ohio and anticipate the enhanced quality of life this site brings to our region.

For further information regarding The Point Industrial Park, please contact:

Jeremy Clay, Director
jeremy@ledcorp.org

Southern Ohio Procurement Outreach Center

The Southern Ohio Procurement Outreach Center's (SOPOC) purpose is to identify business firms that are qualified to sell their goods and services to the Department of Defense (DoD), other federal agencies, and state government programs. This process can result in a stimulation of the economy, which leads to economic growth, and creation of jobs. Currently, the SOPOC serves an area referred to as the Region 7 South Central Ohio Business Development Center Consortium which includes the counties: Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto, and Vinton. The SOPOC continued reaching out to small businesses in all of the ten counties it serves.

SOPOC's fiscal year runs from August 1st to July 31st. As always, the counselors met with economic development directors, key chamber personnel, and business development representatives throughout the region to educate them on the services available from the SOPOC and to solicit their support in engaging potential clients. Counselors have contacted and met with new and existing small business clients to help them with various registrations and assist with the various components of the bid/award process. They also sponsored 15 small business workshops and co-sponsored 14 for this fiscal year.

Services offered by SOPOC include assistance in a variety of areas:

- ◆ Completing required registrations; e.g. Central Contractor Registration, Online Representations

and Certifications, Ohio Vendor Registration

- ◆ Identification of small business designations and help with certifications; e.g. HUBZone and EDGE certifications, Veteran-owned business, Woman-owned business, Minority-owned business
- ◆ Bid-Match service which searches major websites for agency solicitations and awards
- ◆ Development of a "Capability Statement" that highlights company assets and strengths along with special designations and certifications
- ◆ Marketing assistance to target agencies and prime contractors that purchase goods and services from client's small business





Clients were awarded contracts to build utility lines, make tent poles for the DoD, construct public schools, roads, and buildings, assemble sandbags, perform janitorial services, manufacture parts

- ◆ Cultivating relationships with local buying agents to assist referrals and networking opportunities for small business clients
- ◆ Presenting workshops on selling to government agencies and hosting workshops in which local contracting agents communicate the “how to” of selling to their agency
- ◆ Hosting match-making conferences where small businesses can meet directly with a variety of buying agents
- ◆ Assisting clients in developing an effective marketing strategy with strong emphasis on helping in the creation of a strong web presence

for military components for the DoD, repair and build roofs for public housing projects, sell electrical supplies to military and state agencies, and to perform maintenance, health, and landscaping services, and catering.

The SOPOC department is reporting \$7,281,520.80 in contract award revenue for our clients this program year.

We received the highest rating of “Outstanding” on our audit, which was done on April 8th, 2014.

For further information, please contact:

www.sopoc.org
Jordan Lucas, Program Director
Jordan@sopoc.org

SOPOC serviced 187 small business clients this year. The total number of contracts awarded for the program year was 308! This includes: 294 prime contracts –and 14 sub-contract awards received by small businesses.



Jordan Lucas,
Program Director

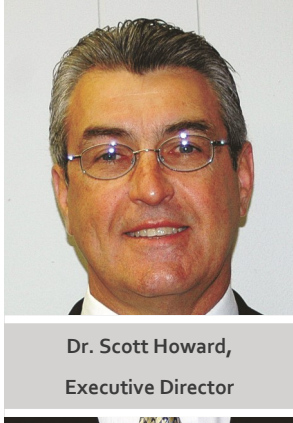


Hayward Chappell,
Counselor



Rodney Young,
Counselor

Ohio Strategic Training Center



Dr. Scott Howard,
Executive Director

"Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing." ~Theodore Roosevelt

The Ohio Strategic Training Center's (OSTC) second year of operation has been an exciting and gratifying one. We are very pleased to be working with outstanding business partners including Engines Inc., Prestera Trucking, McGinnis Inc., Superior Marine, Liebert, and McSweeney-Jenmar. We are equally excited about our higher education and economic and workforce development partners including Ohio University Southern Campus, Lorain County Community College, Southern State Community College, Lawrence Economic Development Corporation, and Ohio Means Jobs.



Major initiatives during 2014 included starting and expanding training programs, conducting a major regional job forecasting study and analysis for Ohio University Regional Higher Education, pursuing a state capital budget earmark, and participating as a work group member of the American Lightweight Materials Manufacturing Innovation Institute (ALMMII).

Truck driver shortages continue to plague the transportation industry. In a report in the Cleveland Plain Dealer, Ohio Governor John Kasich stated that long distance truck driving will be one of the types of jobs the administration thinks will be in demand in Ohio over the next few years. The Ohio Strategic Training Center is pleased to continue to partner with Southern State Community College to bring the Truck Driving Academy to Lawrence County and the surrounding region. OSTC chose Southern State Community College as a partner because of their solid



history of increasing the pool of skilled, trained CDL drivers who are essential to the economic well-being of our region. Over the past twelve months nineteen individuals enrolled in the Class A CDL training program. A challenge currently facing the CDL training program is a lack of funding sources to support tuition costs. Due to the short term nature of the training program, participants do not

have access to the traditional need based grant programs. Access to financial aid could easily triple enrollment over the next twelve months. We are currently exploring alternatives to assist program participants with tuition costs.

We were also pleased to assist Southern State Community College in securing grant dollars from the Ohio Board of Regents to enhance and upgrade truck driving training equip-



ment.

As reported in 2013, OSTC received a one million dollar state budget earmark to construct a portable welding training lab in Lawrence County. During the program's inaugural year, the partnership between Lorain County Community College and the Ohio Strategic Training Center to offer college credit welding training exceeded expectations.

Classes began in May with a second cohort group starting in August. A total of 28 students enrolled and will complete the program in spring 2015. Using a portable welding lab provided by Lorain County Community College and a classroom facility provided by the Lawrence Economic Development Corporation, start-up of welding training began while the new portable welding lab was being constructed. Upon completion of the certificate program, students may

continue on and complete the remaining academic courses at Ohio University Southern to receive an Associate degree from Lorain County community College in welding technology.

Construction of the new portable welding lab began in the fourth quarter of 2014 with an expected completion and delivery date of early March 2015. The 16 station industrial welding training lab will be equipped with state of the art welding equipment using the most advanced welding training solution on the market today. The new portable lab will more than double current training capacity and will also provide flexibility to accommodate pipe welding training.

In late 2013 the Ohio Strategic Training Center (OSTC) entered into a contract with Ohio University Regional Higher Education to conduct a twenty-four county job forecasting study and analysis. The objective of Ohio University's Regional Campus System was to ensure that the program offerings of its regional campuses meet the needs of the businesses surrounding those campuses. OSTC contracted with Regionomics, a Columbus-based local economic and workforce strategy firm, to undertake the analytical component of the project.

The first stage of the three-stage project identified the "driver industries" of the counties surrounding each regional campus. Driver industries are those representing a greater-than-average share of the area's total economic output and are ideally growing faster than the national average for the industry. These are the industries that are most important for the local economy's growth and development and are the most worthwhile for focused workforce development.

During the second stage, regional campus leaders selected three focus industries from among the drivers. The critical occupations in each industry were

identified based on a long-term projection of growth and replacement needs in the region and the necessary skills for those occupations were identified. Ohio University Southern selected logistics, manufacturing, and health care as focus industries.

The third stage included assembling panels of local representatives from each of the selected industries to confer with campus leaders on the specific needs that the programs should address.

During 2014 OSTC and Regionomics engaged in collecting and analyzing the necessary data and developing draft reports for each regional campus. By the close of 2014, OSTC completed and presented each of the five regional campuses with a draft of a customized job forecasting study and analysis and conducted a total of nine industry panel meetings at three of the five campuses. The remaining work to finish the project is scheduled to be completed during the first quarter of 2015.

OSTC partnered with the Lawrence Economic Development Corporation in an effort to secure state capital dollars to construct a multi-purpose facility to support business and industry. The state capital request outlined plans for a 10,000 sq. ft. energy efficient facility dedicated to research, energy, maritime, heavy manufacturing, workforce development, and a logistics focused business incubator. The planned facility is to be located on a 4.9 acre site at The Point Industrial Park. Even though the capital allocation fell short of our request, we were awarded \$325,000.

We are exploring how these resources may be used to take the first step in creating the Research and Development Center while concurrently pursuing other revenue sources to fill the gap.

The Ohio Strategic Training Center was invited to join the American Light-

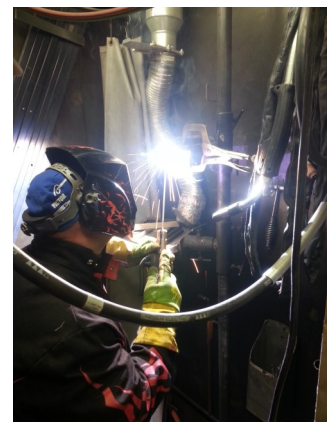
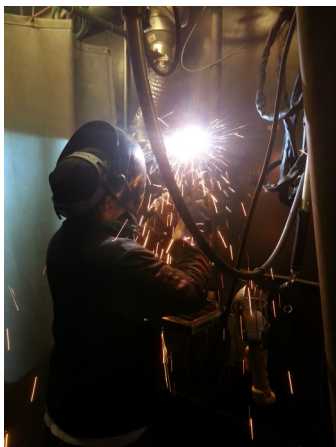
weight Materials Manufacturing (ALMMII) Work Group. ALMMII is led by Ohio based manufacturing technology non-profit Edison Welding Institute, the University of Michigan, and the Ohio State University. The consortia will be regional in nature but serve the entire nation by involving more than 70 companies, universities, non-profit research institutions, and workforce development intermediaries from around the country. The work group met for the first time in Detroit, Michigan on September 22-23, 2014 with close to 90 national, state, and local education, workforce, and economic development experts gathered to launch our work to build the ALMMII-related pipeline of talent needed to commercialize new lightweight technologies and to ensure the success of this manufacturing innovation institute. The Ohio state ALMMII team is scheduled to meet for the first time in January 2015.

Looking forward to 2015, as Theodore Roosevelt once said, "Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing." Therefore, we look forward to growing existing training programs and developing new partnerships to serve the workforce needs of the region. We believe this is work worth doing!

For further information regarding OSTC, please contact:
Scott Howard, Director
scott@ohiotraining.net



Ohio Strategic Training Center
Assisting our clients in achieving their most ambitious goals.



Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Lawrence County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), established by the Lawrence Economic Development Corporation in 1983, is in charge of promoting travel and tourism in Lawrence County, Ohio. The CVB still averages over 350 inquiries per month and serves as the county's tourist information center along U.S. Route 52. Although the only source of funding utilized by the CVB is through the Lawrence County Hotel/Motel tax, the Bureau functions productively with a department director and several volunteers throughout the community organizing and marketing events and attractions.

The primary function of the CVB is to market the entire county to potential visitors statewide and nationwide. In keeping up with yearly publications, an annual calendar of events is published each year to market Lawrence County's major events. After the publication is designed and printed, the events are also logged and updated into our state's travel and tourism websites: discoverohio.com, trave-lohio.com, and appalachianohio.com. Events placed on these sites in 2012 included the following as well as many other smaller events in which the CVB helped in either planning and/or marketing of:

Gus Macker Basketball Tournament- an annual event that takes place in downtown Ironton organized by the Friends of Ironton. This event continues to grow and in 2007 attracted over 12,000 visitors to Lawrence County for one weekend in May.

Memorial Day Parade -the longest continuous running parade in the history of the United States.

Clean Up Day- annual volunteer county-wide cleanup event organized by the Lawrence/Scioto Solid Waste Management District.

Annual Appalachian Uprising -a music festival that attracts fans from all over the country.

Lawrence County Fair-annual county fair with the sale of livestock from the local 4H club.

Over the Backyard Fence Tour- the Ironton In Bloom organization's annual tour of the most beautiful backyards in the City or Ironton.

Rally on the River-annual motorcycle rally that took place in downtown Ironton. During this weekend in August, over 25,000 motorcycle enthusiasts of all ages roared through the streets of Hanging Rock and Ironton to get a glimpse of river life and festivities.

Symmes Creek Canoe Caper- annual clean up and festival hosted by the Symmes Creek Restoration Committee.

Historic Cemetery Walk at Woodland Cemetery -local members of the Lawrence County Historical Society await visitors during the dark evening hours to tell the tales of our founding fathers.

The Lion's Club Haunted Tunnel - ghouls and goblins line the walls and creep around the corners in Ohio's only such event that takes place in the historic tunnel on U.S. Route 93.

The CVB also acts as a hub for information to our region. Since our office is the first stop off of Interstate 64, many visitors come in for directions and pamphlets before heading on to their destination of choice. Lawrence County doesn't have a state funded visitor's center, but the CVB takes on the responsibilities of displaying mar-

keting materials and travel information as well as reciprocating partnerships with surrounding states and counties in order to assist in the

promotion of the entire region as a whole. With this duty, the CVB also has maintained all information for tourist and information seekers through the Lawrence County webpage. This site is continually updated to encompass the entire county as well as the agency departments of the Chamber of Commerce, LEDC, POC, and CVB. The site now has information regarding lifestyle, utilities, government, development, attractions and education and can be used as a drawing factor for visitors, developers and people who are looking to relocate.

For more information regarding events and activities in Lawrence County, please contact:

Viviane Vallance, Director
viviane@ledcorp.org



Viviane Vallance, Director



Agency Staff and Contact Information:

Bill Dingus, Executive Director: dingus@ohio.edu

(listed alphabetically)

Hayward Chappell, SOPOC Business Counselor: hayward@sopoc.org

Jeremy Clay, Associate Executive Director: jeremy@ledcorp.org

Shirley Dyer, Chamber Director: shirley@lawrencecountyohio.org

Jennifer Evans, Grants Compliance Office: jennifer@ledcorp.org

Scott Howard, OSTC Director, scott@ohiotraining.net

Viviane Khounlavong-Vallance, Associate Executive Director: viviane@ledcorp.org

Jordan Lucas, SOPOC Director: jordan@sopoc.org

Janie Payne, Receptionist: janie@ledcorp.org

Phil Ramsey, CFO: phil@ledcorp.org

Carrie Sias, Assistant Finance Director: carrie@ledcorp.org

Rodney Young, SOPOC Business Counselor: rodney@sopoc.org

216 Collins Avenue

South Point, Ohio 45680

Phone: 740-377-4550

Fax: 740-377-2091

www.lawrencecountyohio.org



Janie Payne

