



# *Rockforward!*

YEAR THREE AND COUNTING...

**ANNUAL REPORT 2010**

**Rockford Area Economic Development Council**

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## DEAR INVESTORS AND STAKEHOLDERS,

Thank you for your generous investment and committed leadership as investors of the Rockford Area Economic Development Council. Our investors - a group comprised of nearly 200 private sector companies, public sector municipalities, labor and trade unions, business and quasi-governmental organizations, educational institutions, and nonprofit agencies - along with the collective efforts of our region's team of professionals and elected officials, are the driving forces behind our many accomplishments in 2010.

We strive to enhance wealth creation in the Rockford Region through *Rockforward!*, our strategic plan for 2008-2012. We accomplish this with efforts to expand, retain and attract employers that create quality jobs. Over the past three years, the RAEDC has been implementing and improving the *Rockforward!* strategic plan; we know that *Rockforward!* results impact the region, making it stronger and better than it was before. All of this is made possible by you, our investors, and the climate of collaboration we create together.

There are five powerful focused strategies of *Rockforward!* Each strategy is designed to answer specific challenges that we face in further developing our economy and these strategies are producing results. The region is moving forward because of a strong collaborative spirit at our Board meetings, in the work of our Solutions Teams and Committees, and among our staff.

2010 certainly was another challenging economic year for the Rockford Region and for the world. We believe that we continued to outperform other regions working in collaboration with our local economic development partners. In the year ahead, we will continue to work together to embrace and assist our local companies, grow our international connections, improve our educational system, and build a strong, sustainable region.

In this third Annual Report since the launch of *Rockforward!*, you will find profiles of investments made in 2010 by existing and new employers in the Rockford Region, along with specific results from each of the five primary strategies of *Rockforward!* In addition, you'll see recognition of the private and public sector organizations that drive the work of the RAEDC through investment and volunteer leadership.

Now, more than ever, we must align our strategies, pool our resources, and work together to sustain and strengthen the economic health of our region. We are grateful to those of you who make the choice to invest in the RAEDC. Your continued support assures that our region is moving forward.

Together, we can create the future we want now. Together,  
we can *Rockforward!*  
Sincerely,



RAEDC Chairman of the Board  
Alpine Bank President & CEO



RAEDC President



## SUCCESS STORIES FOR THE ROCKFORD REGION

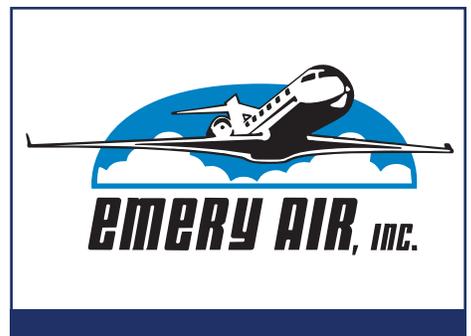
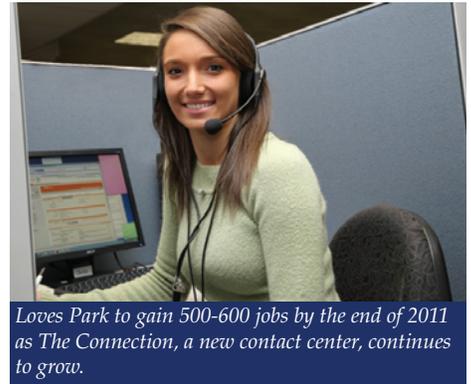
The RAEDC and our regional partners work on a variety of projects each year, ranging from Business retention, expansion and attraction; property development; foreign trade zone opportunities and entrepreneurial growth.

As estimated by our clients, projects were committed for our region representing over 2,051 retained, expanded and new jobs for the region; over \$50.9 Million of capital investment; and approximately 850,500 sq. ft. of space. Join us in celebrating the following 2010 regional success stories generating new wealth for our community.

**The Connection-** One of the nation's leading contact centers plans to add 500 to 600 jobs at its new Loves Park branch by the end of 2011. They provide outsourced customer support and tech support for companies in a variety of industries. Known as The Connection, the firm currently has about 75 employees at its 400-seat contact center and plans to reach the higher number by December 2011. The company added the new branch at 1975 Harlem Road to meet the growth needs of existing and new clients. The inbound calls are for the wireless telecommunications, life and health insurance, financial services and retailing industries. The services will include inbound live operator, live web chat and e-mail responses.

**Emery Air** - has expanded its capabilities to include Regional Airline Maintenance services. Emery Air currently offers a complete range of services for the CRJ200, 700, 900, Dornier 328 aircraft. The FAA has approved the addition of the Bombardier Challenger 600 series to Emery Air's Operations Specifications. The capabilities include but are not limited to heavy maintenance inspections, modifications, mobile repair teams, line maintenance, damage repair, avionics installations and modifications, out of phase inspections, storage programs and bridging inspections. Their regional maintenance facility has 54,000 sq. ft. of office, backshop and hangar space.

**Gleason Cutting Tools Corporation** - completed the successful transition and transfer of its technology and Bevel gear cutting tool manufacturing from its Plymouth, England operation to its other sites around the world, with the majority of the business relocated to the Love Park facility. The product family relocation resulted in job creation within the local area that provided an additional 40 machine operator positions on top of the rapidly expanding workforce that is related to the products historically produced at this site. The Loves Park facility is well known in the industry as a leader in utilizing lean concepts that have repeatedly exceeded customers' expectations relative to short lead-times. All of these concepts have been fully embraced within the new Bevel group and all expectations indicate that in the near future, lead-times for these products will also be reduced. The transfer of this product line puts Gleason Tooling Products Group in a position to provide Bevel products with the highest quality and provide worldwide support to our customers unmatched in the industry.



**Gunite Corporation** - Since 1854, Gunite has been a part of the Rockford community. And, for more than 80 years it has been a manufacturer of innovative and reliable wheel-end components for the commercial trucking industry. But, the world of wheel-end technology is one of constant change. It is the continuous evaluation and modification of design, development, and manufacture of parts and equipment that has allowed Gunite to become and remain a respected leader in the heavy duty vehicle industry. Gunite's products use the latest innovations coupled with a history of performance and customer satisfaction. By being a solutions provider for its customers, Gunite products are offered as standard equipment on most medium and heavy-duty trucks manufactured in North America. This reputation for quality and innovation drove Gunite to announce production



*Gunite announced production expansion plans in 2010, leading to the addition of 137 manufacturing jobs, with an additional 75 coming in 2011.*

expansion plans in 2010, leading to the addition of 137 manufacturing jobs, with an additional 75 coming in 2011. Gunite, a business unit of Accuride Corporation, employs approximately 310 individuals at its 650,000 square foot Rockford, Illinois, manufacturing facility.

**Haldex Hydraulic Systems** - a global manufacture of hydraulic gear pumps, gear motors and hydraulic power units has been operating in Rockford IL U.S.A. since 1929. With the 2010 consolidation of North American operations, the Rockford facility is now the hydraulics center for North America. As part of the consolidation the company has made substantial investments to create a state of the art facility with processes totally aligned with lean manufacturing principals. The consolidation will benefit Haldex North American customers by providing them with one point of contact for a number of business functions including Customer Service, Applications Support, Engineering, Quality and Logistics.



*Haldex Hydraulic Systems consolidated its North American operations in 2010, making Rockford its hydraulics center for North America.*

**Harrison Harmonicas** - a start-up located at the Eigerlab, manufactures the only harmonica made in the USA. Owner Brad Harrison invested \$500,000 to develop machinery to produce the small, nickel-plated B-Radical harmonica. As a musician, Harrison studied the styles of numerous masters with a wide variety of techniques. The result was his own personal, unique style of customizing harmonicas – The Harrison Method – which today is applied to each B-Radical. Harrison Harmonicas currently employs 7 individuals and is still growing.



*Brad Harrison, owner of Harrison Harmonicas, manufactures the only harmonica made in the USA.*

**HR Green, Inc.** - a leading multi-discipline design firm, expanded its operations into Rockford, IL in 2010 with the opening of a 5,000 sf. ft. office at 1330 E. State Street. The new office in Rockford provides the company with closer proximity to existing clients and the ability to cultivate relationships with prospective clients in order to provide a broader market for growth of planning, engineering, transportation, community resources, water/wastewater, construction, environmental, architecture, landscape architecture, technical consulting and renewable energy services. HR Green Company was recently ranked at #205 on Engineering News Record's Top 500 Design Firms list. The firm, founded in 1913, has nearly 400 employees and offers planning, engineering, transportation, community resources, water/wastewater, construction, environmental, buildings, technology and renewable energy services to clients in diverse markets.



**Ingersoll Machine Tools** - Transferring expertise from one industry to another is a good way for companies to grow. And that's just what Ingersoll Machine Tools did, from aerospace to wind. They applied their proprietary technology and experience of supplying composite manufacturing systems for aerospace to the fast-growing wind industry. In addition to their long-standing customers in the transportation, agriculture/construction and machining industries, Ingersoll now manufactures 20,000-pound cast-iron hubs for Vestas Wind Systems, a Danish company that is the largest manufacturer of wind turbines in the world with 28 percent market share. The hubs are 10 feet in diameter, large enough for a person to stand in. The blades are bolted to the hub, connecting the blades to the motor to create wind energy.



*Ingersoll provides machined hubs for the world's largest manufacturer of wind turbines. The long-term contract created 87 new jobs in Rockford.*

**Pyramid Plastics** - In 2010, Pyramid Plastics purchased a 700 ton and a 1000 ton press, adding to its already impressive line-up of injection molding equipment. Pyramid's capabilities now extend from 20 ton to 1000 ton press sizes. The additional equipment required an expansion of the facility by 50,000 sq. ft. and by completion will create up to 30 additional jobs.



*Pyramid Plastics expanded its capabilities in 2010 with the purchase of new presses. The equipment purchase will require an expansion of its facility, as well as the creation of 30 additional jobs.*

## ADDITIONAL 2010 REGIONAL SUCCESSES INCLUDE:

### **Advanced Heat Treat**

Invested \$550,000 in a 22,000 sq. ft. expansion, 10 jobs committed

### **American Bentonite International**

Invested \$1 Million in a 100,000 sq. ft. facility, with 10 jobs committed

### **Davi**

Invested \$1 Million in a 20,000 sq. ft. facility, with 10 jobs committed

### **Ewikon Molding Technologies**

Acquired a 9,000 sq. ft. facility

### **Phoenix University**

Established a 5,000 sq. ft. facility, with 15 jobs committed; a \$1 Million investment

### **Quest Global**

Opened a 5,000 sq. ft. office with a total of 50 jobs and an investment of \$1 Million

### **Ring Container**

Invested \$7.4 Million in an 8,000 sq. ft. facility expansion

### **Rockford Drop Forge**

Invested \$1 Million in renovations to prepare space for new equipment & vacate a public street, 15 jobs committed

### **Rotary Concepts**

Relocation from Janesville, WI brought \$1 Million investment in 10,000 sq. ft. facility, 15 jobs committed

### **TH Foods**

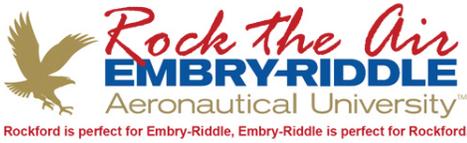
Invested \$13 Million in an 18,000 sq. ft. facility expansion, 20 jobs committed

### **UPS**

Embarked on modernization program with support from the State of Illinois for its Rockford and Hodgkins facilities helping to stabilize approximately 500 jobs in our region

### **Widmer Interiors**

Invested \$75,000 in a 10,000 sq. ft. facility, 25 jobs committed



The Rockford Region has a golden opportunity to land the world's leading aerospace and aviation university. Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University is searching for the site of its third residential campus, and a prime spot at Chicago Rockford International Airport is the perfect choice. An aeronautical campus will help our regional aerospace industry soar and bring more jobs, money and people to this area.

## MAKING THE CASE TO EMBRY-RIDDLE

### 1. Embry-Riddle is a World Leader

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University is a private, coeducational university serving more than 30,000 students at its two residential campuses, more than 170 non-residential centers and online programs. It serves traditional students, working adults and members of the U.S. military around the world. U.S. News & World Report ranks Embry-Riddle's aerospace engineering program number one in the nation among schools without doctoral programs. Embry-Riddle's aerospace engineering program is the largest in the nation. The major airlines hire more alumni from Embry-Riddle than from any other collegiate aviation program.

### 2. Rockford is a Growing Aerospace Center

Chicago Rockford International Airport is an international-grade airport contributing nearly \$1 Billion per year of economic impact to the region. It is the nation's 19<sup>th</sup> largest cargo airport, a growing passenger airport and a prime location for business, educational and research developments. More than 130 companies in the Rockford Region supply products to the global aerospace industry, including Hamilton Sundstrand and Woodward. The aerospace industry is a key growth area for the region's economy and a source of well-paying jobs.

### 3. This is an Opportunity for the Entire Midwest

More than 8.4 million people live within 90 minutes of the Chicago Rockford International Airport. More than 13.1 million people live within two hours of here. Embry-Riddle will be able to draw from an extensive market of talented students looking to enter aerospace and aviation careers. This will benefit not only Rockford, but the Chicago, Milwaukee and Madison areas and beyond.

### 4. The Region is Coming Together

Local, state and federal officials support an Embry-Riddle Rockford campus. They're pledging to do whatever possible to bring the school here, promote it and help it grow.



Nearly 170 community leaders showed their support for Embry-Riddle by attending a Press Conference, which also launched the Rock the Air Petition Drive, on September 13, 2010.

**MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF ROCKFORWARD!**

The goals of *Rockforward!* are methodically tracked through numerous metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of the RAEDC's marketing and recruitment activities. These include:

- Gross Metropolitan Product (GMP) increase, including *Rockforward!*'s impact on GMP
  - net new primary jobs and jobs recruited
  - per capita income
  - international exports
  - population growth
  - economic development exposure
  - development ready land parcels



The RAEDC utilizes a wide array of statistical resources to produce these metrics, including the Illinois Department of Employment Security, the U.S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Northern Illinois University, and our own Voice of the Customer surveys.

**EVALUATING 2010 RESULTS**

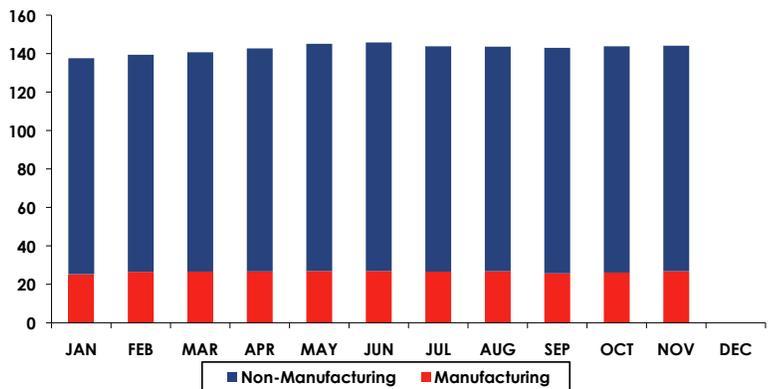
As 2010 drew to a close, we continued with our adjusted models in response to the recession. While an annual fixed rate of growth no longer applies as when the *Rockforward!* campaign was started, we are able to make several observations regarding *Rockforward!*'s primary metrics.

First, available jobs remained relatively constant or actually increased in most major industries through 2010 while the number of unemployed decreased 19.5%. The largest gains were in manufacturing (+1.1%), trade (+3.8%), transportation/warehousing/utilities (+2.7%), educational and health services (+1.3%), and government (+1.8%). This is consistent with regional and national trends.

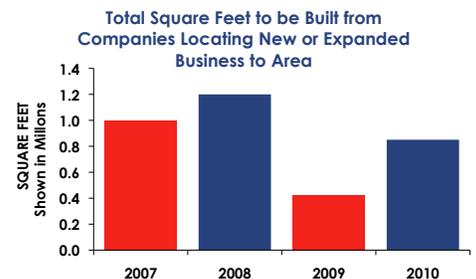
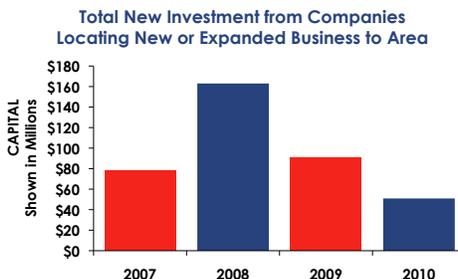
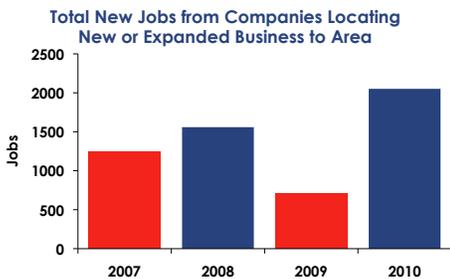
Second, while the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis accelerated availability of the 2008 GMP figures, no accelerated figure was released for 2009 last year. Our region's GMP increased from \$12.1 Billion to \$12.4 Billion in 2008. This is largely due to a steady increase in exports. We can also point to results from 2010 client projects managed by the RAEDC and our regional partners. These results indicate our region is working together to achieve our goals despite the unprecedented economic downturn.

As estimated by our clients, 2,051 new jobs will be created in the Rockford Region by existing and new employers, \$50.9 Million of capital investment will be made, and 580,500 square feet of space will be added in the coming years.

Rockford Region Jobs in 12-Month Moving Average, 2010



Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security



## ROCKFORWARD! STRATEGY: CREATING A THRIVING BUSINESS CLIMATE

Our local companies are our best place for job growth. Statistics say that 70% of our job growth will come from existing companies that already invest in the community. The RAEDC focuses business retention resources where they can have the greatest impact by identifying fastest-growing companies and those most at risk.

### IMPROVING THE BUSINESS CLIMATE THROUGH RESEARCH

In 2010, the RAEDC and regional partners completed 121 Voice of the Customer (VOC) Surveys with company leaders, learning what our employers need to be more successful. The surveys also help to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement in the business environment. During these meetings, we've learned of planned expansions in the next three years requiring \$178 million dollars of investment in our region, the need for nearly 300,000 square feet of new space, and the creation of 158 new jobs. These investments are expected to be made within the healthcare, manufacturing and other service industries. A common opportunity for improvement identified once again this year is the need for a workforce with enhanced skills. The expectations of our employers continue to increase and in a number of industries, our workforce has not kept pace. As a result of these surveys, the RAEDC responded to over 181 action items for employers in 2010. Since half of our primary employment is in companies that are corporately held outside our region, building relationships with the local division using VOC was a key strategy. Additionally, we have begun to call on corporate headquarters and completed four of those visits in 2010. Business Trends phone calls have been made with many of our RAEDC investors to understand their position and how it relates to the current economy. These insightful dialogues have helped us identify trends, focus strategies, and shape our actions.

### EXPANDING INTERNATIONAL TRADE

In September, International Bioenergy Days (IBED2010) was successfully hosted in Rockford. More than 35 speakers covered a wide range of topics with three tracks, and over 160 individuals attended the four day event. The U.S. Ambassador of Sweden attended and provided a keynote speech explaining why Sweden is a global leader in bioenergy and sustainability. The event was held in downtown Rockford with the Coronado Performing Arts Center serving as the primary venue. In 2010, the RAEDC sponsored the Go Global III Conference, "GPS - Global Partnerships = Success," which grew to include a regional leadership forum for economic development professionals. Attendees obtained access to key leaders and experts in the U.S. international trade community, learning key strategies for growing their international market share. The conference attracted over 200 attendees from 14 states and six countries, including international consulates from Chicago. A grant was awarded to the RAEDC to implement an Illinois SBDC International Trade Center through Rock Valley College. This will leverage current international initiatives and provide additional funding to provide one-on-one export consulting to regional companies.

### CULTIVATING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT

The end of 2010 also brought about finalized operational development to Rockford Area Strategic Initiatives, the partner organization to Rockford Area Economic Development Council. This achievement will enable the RAEDC to partner with area organizations and receive additional funding.



## ADVOCATING ON BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT ISSUES

Meetings of the Winnebago County Regional Collaboration Policy Committee were held throughout the year, and projects have been identified for the group to develop. The policy focuses on a commitment to regional collaboration, providing competitive development tools for businesses, as well as protecting our regional assets, and fostering innovation. The committee includes: City of Loves Park Mayor Darryl F. Lindberg; City of Rockford Mayor Larry Morrissey; Village of Cherry Valley Mayor Jim Claeysen; Village of Machesney Park Mayor Tom Strickland; Village of Rockton Mayor Dale Adams; Village of Roscoe Mayor Dave A. Krienke; Village of Winnebago Mayor Frank Eubank; and Winnebago County Chairman Scott Christiansen.

## ROCKFORWARD! STRATEGY: TARGETED MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT

Business attraction efforts continue to be focused on Chicago's Real Estate Community, Professional Site Selectors, international trade, and our targeted industries, including the aerospace industry. The RAEDC hosted 10 international delegations, attended 27 trade shows, and traveled on three international sales missions. And, thanks to the commitment of our investors, the RAEDC and its economic development partners received over 80 project referrals in 2010!

### PRODUCING TARGETED RESEARCH AND MESSAGING

Keeping our data fresh is key to helping employers know the assets of our region. In 2010, the RAEDC worked with the Workforce Investment Board to update our Laborshed study. We also are improving our knowledge of local property readiness with a new database of "shovel-ready-properties," which is being developed in coordination with the RAEDC Business Attraction Committee. The RAEDC's focus on China, launched in 2007, is producing uncommon results. Wanxiang selected Rockford after an exhaustive multi-state search and held its ribbon cutting in 2010.

The rail industry is projected to grow in our country and with high speed rail legislation requiring U.S. made content, there is opportunity for our Rockford area manufacturers to enter this supply chain. The RAEDC co-hosted The Future of Manufacturing conference in 2010, which featured three top rail car manufacturers: Talgo, Nippon Sharyo and Electromotive Diesel. Additionally, a major match-making activity for Talgo, a Spanish manufacturer of high speed railway vehicles, was led by RAEDC staff. This endeavor consisted of soliciting potential vendors and coordinating submissions. Staff is also actively engaged in the activities of the Supplier Excellence Alliance (SEA) connecting our local aerospace cluster with leading global aerospace manufacturers and practices.

### MARKETING TO TARGETED AUDIENCES

In the past three years, the RAEDC has been convening our aerospace investors to ask how we could grow this segment faster and they responded with great enthusiasm. The input has helped us develop our sales plan and as a result we have attended top industry trade shows and made key sales calls. The RAEDC formalized the local aerospace steering committee as an official committee of the RAEDC, renaming it the Rockford Area Aerospace Network (RAAN), chaired by Jeff Kaney, CEO of Kaney Aerospace. One of its first projects was to have a presence at the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) Conference in Atlanta, which was attended by the RAEDC and eight RAEDC investor delegate companies. The booth was sponsored by the RAEDC and planned in collaboration with its delegates. Each attending company reported strong lead generation as a result of attending.

In addition we are focused on working with Congressman Manzullo's office to expand opportunities for our local companies to be a part of the supply chains of major Defense and Commercial industry companies, such as GE Aviation and Boeing. Over 125 regional aerospace companies attended supplier symposiums in 2010. The GE Aviation Supplier Symposium included B2B meetings with GE Aviation, Woodward and other regional aerospace companies.

We continue to grow our international connections through trade missions and sales trips. The Farnborough International Air Show was attended by RAEDC staff, with funding provided by the State of Illinois. Staff returned with 10 leads representing the potential for 725 jobs and approximately \$37 Million of capital investment in our region. The RAEDC also traveled to China in 2010 to participate in the China International Fair for Investment & Trade, China's only trade conference that promotes outbound investment from China. Staff returned with nine leads for greenfield development in the Rockford Area. The third annual China Trade Mission was coordinated to market the Rockford Area in six Chinese cities: Hong Kong, Xiamen, Hangzhou, Shanghai, Beijing and Tianjin.

The new Rockford Asia Business Association was launched in 2010 to support business and economic development through trade promotion between the Rockford Area and Asia. A meeting of the group was hosted in 2010 as a "business card exchange." The networking event provided opportunities for collaboration among the local Asian business community.

## DEVELOPING FOCUSED MEDIA RELATIONS

In 2010, the RAEDC, in collaboration with local media partners, unveiled a multimedia campaign to promote positive assets of the region from an economic development perspective. This program helps to educate citizens about assets available to existing and potential employers and how they can help. The campaign will run through 2011, and highlights four areas: higher education, international trade, strong infrastructure, and thriving local businesses.

## MAINTAINING A WEBSITE THAT PERFORMS

Our website is a key source of data and we continue to see increases in our traffic. In addition to updating the RAEDC site, staff revamped the sites for EIGERlab, Tri State Alliance and the I-39 Logistics Corridor Association. Staff also maintains websites for MyEDD, 2010 International Bioenergy Days, and Rockford Global Green Cooperative Initiative.



*The RAEDC formalized the local aerospace steering committee as an official committee of the RAEDC, renaming it the Rockford Area Aerospace Network (RAAN), Chaired by Jeff Kaney, CEO of Kaney Aerospace.*

## ROCKFORWARD! STRATEGY: WORLD-CLASS BUSINESS INFRASTRUCTURE

In 2010 the Rockford Area Strategic Initiatives and the Rockford Region Economic Development District were established. Now the region has more ways to collaborate together.

By merging the assets of the EIGERlab with the assets of the RAEDC, we enhance our capacity to assist companies in the region. This partnership with Rock Valley College is bringing programming to both start-up and established employers. Focused to assist start-ups, early stage growth and expanding existing businesses, EIGERlab serves as a one-stop resource for entrepreneurs and innovators to lease space at reasonable rates, participate in peer groups, access business services, utilize design engineering and art-to-part rapid prototyping services, as well as the potential to learn new skills, meet with dedicated mentors, link to qualified investors and receive assistance in selling to the government or executing global market expansions.

The Rockford Region Economic Development District allows us to apply for federal grants from the U.S. Economic Development Administration. This source of federal funds uses a process that produces a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for job creation – a first in our region.

The RAEDC was named as a grant recipient in a six-county area in northern Illinois and southeastern Wisconsin. It includes Boone and Winnebago Counties and extends for a three-year period to 2013. The grant will be administered by the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater as part of the EDA's Auto Adjustment Entrepreneurial Support Initiative which will help create jobs by expanding entrepreneurship efforts in this region. It is one of a series of grants by the U.S. Department of Commerce to help communities recover from plant closures and layoffs by automotive manufacturers and suppliers.

A \$1 Million HUD grant was awarded to develop the area's first Regional Sustainability Plan. This creates a joint program through the EPA, HUD, and DOT that is coordinated with our local RMAP and Housing Authorities. The proposal includes funding for expanding and continuing the efforts to create a regional sustainability plan and a performance measuring process. This system and the resulting plan is being called "Rockford Region Vital Signs." Only 45 communities in the country were awarded this type of grant.

The RAEDC continues to partner with colleagues from Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa through the Tri-State Alliance. Now entering its fourth year, this alliance for advancing infrastructure and commerce is convening resources among a collaboration of leaders from 17 counties. This year's successful summit in Beloit had over 150 federal, state, and local officials discussing how to better align our regional efforts.

## ROCKFORWARD! STRATEGY: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The RAEDC and regional partners are working to pursue a proactive, strategic, and collaborative approach to train, attract, and retain a talented workforce.

We know that increasing the number of people with college degrees directly impacts our wealth, our employment and our quality of life. Significant time was spent by many partners to launch Alignment Rockford. Based on the success of Alignment Nashville, this collaboration's success is critical to our future. The mission of Alignment Rockford is to align community resources in support of public school achievement and improve student health and happiness, thereby advancing the economic and social well-being of the Rockford Region. Over 140 community leaders volunteered to be part of two boards and four committees. All have begun their work to identify ways to assist the school district to meet their recently completed Visualize 2015 strategic plan. Alignment Rockford's job is to assist the school district to meet its plan. Our mentors from Alignment Nashville are pleased with the speed in which the structure has come together. The enthusiasm of both school personnel and the business people is inspiring. We look forward to great results from these dedicated people.

The RAEDC and thirteen community leaders from partner organizations sustained the work of the Attracting and Retaining Talent to the Rockford Area steering committee (ARTRA) and completed the fourth Annual LiveBig Weekend and Jobapalooza professional career fair over Thanksgiving weekend. ARTRA began in 2006 and hired Rebecca Ryan from Next Generation Consulting to conduct a "handprint" report for the Rockford Region. Rebecca recently returned to Rockford to help kickoff Live Big Weekend 2010, and is impressed with our progress. Ryan often uses ARTRA as an example of what a determined community can accomplish.

Our region's manufacturing companies are in a growth mode. At TechWorks (part of the EIGERlab) we are training people to be job ready for CNC and other machine operator positions. In conjunction with the Workforce Connection, we identify training programs for local employers. Winnebago County is assisting with a revolving loan fund to launch people into new careers.



*Mark Podemski, RAEDC VP for Development, was awarded the 2010 Partner of the Year Award from the Chicago Jobs Council.*

## ROCKFORWARD! STRATEGY: EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES FUND

The *Rockforward!* Leadership Council manages an Emerging Opportunities Fund that is designed for discretionary investment in mutually-agreed-upon, forward-thinking initiatives that will leverage positive change for economic development of the Rockford Region. Each year, up to \$175,000 out of the RAEDC's annual budget is placed into the Emerging Opportunities Fund. Leadership Council members met quarterly in 2010 to generate investment proposals, deliberate projects, and make investment decisions.

Four investment proposals were generated and considered, and two projects were ultimately funded. First, \$60,000 was allocated to Alignment Rockford, which is designed to support improved student achievement and educational attainment by aligning community resources behind the strategic plan of Rockford Public Schools. The process engages a wide range of public and private organizations and individuals within a synergistic and focused working committee structure. Over the next year, Alignment Rockford's strategic activities will: engage public and private partners; build a school support network; manage communications; and evaluate and report results. Second, \$115,000 was awarded in 2010 for a Regional Director of Governmental Affairs. The project hired the director who will identify and attract federal funding and regulatory support for regional needs. While the region benefits from strong relationships with our federal elected representatives, the region has not had the benefit of professionally coordinated federal government

affairs management and advocacy. Short-term benefits will be increased advocacy for federal funding and regulatory support. The long-term return would be the establishment of an ongoing federal governmental affairs program for the region that dramatically improves the region's success in identifying and attracting federal funding and regulatory support.

In 2008, the Leadership Council invested seed money in three initiatives: \$75,000 for the Higher Education Alliance of the Rock River Region (HEARRR) to launch the Rockford Area Career Clearinghouse; \$50,000 for the Rockford Charter School Initiative; and \$50,000 in the Freedom Field Renewable Energy Project. In 2009 the Leadership Council invested seed money in two initiatives: \$75,000 for the Rock River Development Partnership; and \$90,400 for the Solar Thermal Heating and Cooling System at the Freedom Field Renewable Energy Project.

By placing the Emerging Opportunities Fund at their disposal, the Leadership Council targets investment initiatives in which they feel will propel positive change for the region.



*Rockford City Market was launched in 2010 by the Rock River Development Partnership, a project seeded by the Emerging Opportunities Fund.*



*In 2010 Leadership Council toured Freedom Field to learn about the technologies that are in place. The Freedom Field Renewable Energy Project as well as the Solar Thermal Heating and Cooling System were seeded by the Emerging Opportunities Fund.*

## ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS AND INFORMATION AVAILABLE

### INVESTOR EVENTS

Four Investor Events were hosted by the RAEDC in 2010 which included networking time and updates on recent initiatives. In the first quarter, staff presented results from over 100 Voice of the Customer surveys completed in 2009 and a summary of information for visits performed over the last five years. The second quarter event showcased the work of the RAEDC in a trade show format allowing our Investors and their guests to learn how to get engaged in our work. The third quarter event was held during the International Bioenergy Days Conference which provided the business community the opportunity to network with conference attendees and view bioenergy exhibits. The Annual Meeting and Dinner held in the fourth quarter included an in-depth update of *Rockforward!*'s progress and plans for the future, as well as a keynote address featuring George Brooks, central region president of UPS. To receive information about upcoming events, call 815.987.8118.

### PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE

The *Rockforward!* President's Circle meets to discuss and take action on economic development priorities and strategies. RAEDC investors contributing \$25,000 or more per year become members of the President's Circle, which met four times in 2010.

### QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

The RAEDC maintains a Rockford Area Quick Reference Guide that includes regional data for the Rockford MSA, including location information. It features industries; population and income characteristics; access to markets; labor market characteristics; a list of major employers; and healthcare, telecommunications, and education resources. The guide is available online in the Resource Library at [rockfordil.com](http://rockfordil.com) or upon request at the RAEDC offices.

### NEWSLETTERS

The RAEDC publishes a variety of newsletters for targeted audiences.

- *Developments* is a quarterly newsletter that highlights business, industry, and real estate news in the Rockford Area.
- *Global Relations* is an electronic newsletter targeting the Chinese community, both local and abroad, and contains updates on Rockford Area development opportunities.
- *Halsningar* is an electronic newsletter targeted to the Chinese community, both local and abroad, and contains updates on Rockford Area development opportunities.
- *Rising Star* is an electronic newsletter that is targeted to national and regional site selectors and brokers and contains the latest development opportunities in the Rockford Area.

Contact the RAEDC at 815.987.8118 if you would like to be added to any of our newsletter mailing lists.



## BOARD, INVESTORS, AND STAFF

Thanks to the volunteer leadership of investors, the RAEDC's strategies are producing results! A strong collaborative spirit is evident in board meetings, in the work of solutions teams and committees, and amongst the staff.

### 2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### Executive Committee

##### Chairman of the Board

William C. Roop, Alpine Bank

##### Vice Chair

D. Kraig Pierceson, Larson & Darby Group

##### Treasurer

Joel Sjostrom, Sjostrom & Sons, Inc.

##### Immediate Past Chair

John Chadwick, WREX-TV

##### Director at Large

David Schertz, OSF St. Anthony Medical Center

##### Director at Large

Dr. Jack Becherer, Rock Valley College

##### Director at Large

Rena Cotsones, Northern Illinois University

##### Leadership Council Chair

Dr. William Gorski, SwedishAmerican Health System

##### Business Attraction Solutions Team Chair

Darrin Golden, IBEW / NECA

##### Business Retention & Expansion Solutions Team Chair

Gary Marzorati, William Charles Ltd.

##### Business & Community Relations Solutions Team Chair

Linda Gerber, Rock River Valley Blood Center

Mayor Lawrence J. Morrissey, City of Rockford

Chairman Scott Christiansen, Winnebago County

Janyce Fadden, RAEDC

#### Directors

R. Richard Bastian, III, Blackhawk Bank

Edward C. Berg, First Northern Credit Union

Steve Bois, Rockford Area Association of REALTORS

Paul Callighan, ComEd

J Chapman, Maverick Media

Pamela S. Fox, Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP

Martin Glass, Woodward

Greg Graber, WIFR-TV

Thomas Green, Barrick, Switzer, Long, Balsley & Van Evera

Jeff Hultman, JP Morgan Chase

Michelle Janke, Harris N.A.

Gary Kaatz, Rockford Health System

Brad Long, Building Trades/Project First Rate

Dr. W. Stephen Minore, Rockford Anesthesiologists Associated, LLC

#### Directors (con't)

Fran Morrissey, The Morrissey Family Businesses

Ed Munguia, Stillman Bank

Brian A. Nelson, Haldex Hydraulics Corporation

Paul Nicolosi, The Buckley Companies

Mark Peterson, CherryVale Mall / CBL & Associates Properties

Bharat Puri, First Rockford Group

Peter Ricker, Rockford Register Star

Andreas Schell, Hamilton Sundstrand

Jon E. Schmidt, Associated Bank

Senator Dave Syverson

Glen Turpoff, Northern Illinois Building Contractors Association

Steve Ward, Riverside Community Bank

Dave Whitmore, IronWorkers Local Union 498

#### Ex-Officio Voting

Mayor Dale Adams, Village of Rockton

Brian Boyer, Greater Rockford

Airport Authority

Sheryl Crowley, Village of Roscoe

Einar Forsman, Rockford Chamber of Commerce

Steve Graceffa, Rock River

Water Reclamation

John Groh, Rockford Area Conv. &

Visitors Bureau

Kris Kieper, Next Rockford

Mayor Darryl Lindberg, City of

Loves Park

Dr. Martin Lipsky, U of I College of

Medicine

Mayor Tom Strickland, Village of

Machesney Park

#### Ex-Officio Nonvoting

Northwest Illinois Development Alliance  
Executive Director

Reid Montgomery, City of Rockford

Sue Mroz, Winnebago County

Regional Planning

John Phelps, Rockford Local

Development Corp.

Jeff Polsean, State of Illinois

C. Mark Williams, Growth

Dimensions of Belvidere & Boone

County

#### City of Rockford Liaisons

Alderman Frank Beach

Alderman Bill Robertson

#### Village of Roscoe Liaison

Trustee Sue Petty

#### Winnebago County Liaisons

County Board Member Frank Gambino

County Board Member Karen Hoffman

### 2010 STAFF

Brandi Beals

Research Associate

Genevieve Borich

Director of Research and Planning

Mary Cacioppi

Director of Investor Relations

Janyce Fadden

President

Leilani Hillis

Manager of Operations

Teri Johnson

Investor Relations Coordinator

M. Alison Lakey

Administrative Services Coordinator

Bea Miller

Business Development Assistant

Mark Podemski

Vice President for Development

Matthew Simpson

Business Development Specialist

Eric Voyles

Vice President of National Business

Development

Carrie Zethmayr

Manager of International Relations and  
Client Solutions

In addition to the chairs serving on the executive committee of the board of directors, we thank the following chairs for their service in 2010:

**Nominating Committee Chair:** Dr. W. Stephen Minore, Rockford Anesthesiologists Associated, LLC

**Audit Committee Chair:** Thomas A. Green, Barrick, Switzer, Long, Balsley & Van Evera

**Education Committee Chair:** Bill Dilts, Rockford Health System

**Rockford Area Aerospace Network Chair:** Jeff Kaney, Kaney Aerospace

## 2010 ROCKFORWARD! INVESTORS

### President's Circle Investors (\$25,000+)

Alpine Bank  
Building Trades / Project First Rate  
City of Rockford  
Comcast  
ComEd  
Cumulus Broadcasting  
First Rockford Group  
Greater Rockford Airport Authority  
Hamilton Sundstrand  
IBEW / NECA  
JP Morgan Chase  
Maverick Media  
Northern Illinois Building Contractors Association  
OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center  
Rockford Area Association of REALTORS  
Rockford Health System  
Rockford Register Star  
SwedishAmerican Health System  
Village of Machesney Park  
WIFR-TV  
Winnebago County  
Woodward  
WQRF TV / WTVO TV  
WREX

### Leadership Council Investors (\$10,000+)

Anderson Packaging, Inc.  
Aqua-Aerobic Systems, Inc.  
Associated Bank  
AT&T  
City of Loves Park  
Eclipse, Inc.  
First Northern Credit Union  
GE Aviation  
Haldex Hydraulics Corporation  
Harris N.A.  
Larson & Darby Group  
Northern Illinois University  
Plumbers & Pipefitters UA Local 23  
Riverside Community Bank  
Rock River Water Reclamation District  
Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Rockford Chamber of Commerce  
Rockford Park District  
Rockford Public Schools  
RSM McGladrey, Inc.  
Sjostrom & Sons, Inc.  
SupplyCore Inc.  
Thermo Fisher Scientific  
Village of Rockton  
Village of Roscoe  
Williams-Manny, Inc.

### Investors (\$2,000+)

Alpha Controls & Services LLC  
Auxxi & Associates, Inc.  
Balanced IT Solutions  
Ballard Properties  
Barrick, Switzer, Long, Balsley & Van Evera  
B/E Aerospace, Inc.

### Investors (\$2,000+) con't

Benedictine University  
Bergstrom Inc.  
Blackhawk Bank  
Blue Cross/Blue Shield  
Boone & Winnebago Counties Workforce Investment Board  
Brian Thomas Photography  
Cadbury Adams USA LLC  
Chem Processing, Inc.  
CherryVale Mall / CBL & Associates Properties  
Chicagoland Roofing Council / United Union of Roofers  
Cliffbreakers Riverside Resort  
Clifton Gunderson LLP  
Clinkenbeard & Associates, Inc.  
Clock Tower Resort & Conference Center  
Corbett, Duncan & Hubly, P.C.  
Cord Construction Company  
Coyle-Varland Insurance Agency, Inc.  
Crawford, Murphy & Tilly, Inc.  
Crusaders Central Clinic Association  
Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad  
Danfoss Drives  
DCEO Office of Regional Outreach  
Doyle, Woodhouse & Moore Inc. Realtors  
Emery Air, Inc.  
Employers' Coalition on Health (ECOH)  
Energy Dynamics, Inc.  
Entré Computer Solutions  
Enviro-Care  
Fehr-Graham & Associates  
Forest City Gear Co., Inc.  
Fridh Construction Services  
Gary W. Anderson & Associates, Inc.  
Giovanni's Restaurant & Convention Center  
Greenlee - A Textron Company  
Greg Tuite & Associates  
Gypsum Supply Co.  
Hampton Properties  
Hanson Professional Services, Inc.  
Hegel Holdings, LLC. dba Minarik Drives  
Helen Hill Communication  
Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP  
Holmstrom & Kennedy, P.C.  
Homer L. Chastain and Associates, LLP  
Illinois Growth Enterprises, Inc.  
IronWorkers Local Union 498  
J & M Plating Inc.  
J.L. Clark - A CLARCOR Company  
Joseph Behr & Sons, Inc.  
Judson University  
Kaney Aerospace  
Laborers' Local #32  
Leading Edge Hydraulics  
Liebovich Steel & Aluminum Co.  
Lowe's Companies, Inc.  
McGreevy Williams P.C.  
Mechanical Inc.  
Members Alliance Credit Union  
Meridian  
Midwest Aero Support, Inc.  
Midwest Community Bank  
NCO Group  
Next Rockford  
Nicor Gas

### Investors (\$2,000+) con't

Nordic Investments  
Northwest Bank  
Orput Companies, Inc.  
Parker Hannifin Corporation  
Per Mar Security Services  
Plante & Moran, PLLC  
PNC Bank  
Powmet, Inc.  
PR Etc.  
Rasmussen College  
Richard L. Johnson Associates, Inc.  
Rock River Valley Blood Center  
Rock Valley College  
Rockford Anesthesiologists Associated, LLC  
Rockford Bank & Trust  
Rockford Career College  
Rockford College  
Rockford Drop Forge Company  
Rockford MetroCentre  
Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning  
Rockford Orthopedic Associates  
Rockford Toolcraft, Inc.  
Savant Capital Management, Inc.  
Schmeling Construction Co.  
Schneider Electric  
SEC Group, Inc.  
Senator Dave Syverson  
Serola Biomechanics, Inc.  
Sheet Metal Workers Local #219 / SMACNA  
SIDCOR, Marketplace of Rockford  
Sikich  
Spring Creek Development Group  
SPX Hydraulic Technologies  
Stewart & Associates Inc.  
Stillman Bank  
Superior Joining Technologies, Inc.  
Tandem Development Group, LLC  
TH Foods, Inc.  
The Bon Ton Stores, Inc.  
The Buckley Companies  
The Morrissey Family Businesses  
Title Underwriters Agency  
U of I College of Medicine  
U.S. Bank  
United Way of Rock River Valley  
Upper Iowa University-Rockford Center  
UPS  
Venture One Real Estate/Rock 39 Industrial Park/Loves Park Corporate Center  
Viking Chemical Company  
Village of Cherry Valley  
Village of Davis Junction  
Village of Winnebago  
Whitehead, Inc. REALTORS  
William Charles Ltd.  
WilliamsMcCarthy, LLP  
Wipfli LLP

**SAVE THE DATE**

**ROCKFORD AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
2011 ANNUAL MEETING & DINNER**

**Wednesday, November 30, 2011**

5:00 pm Networking, 6:30 pm Dinner & Program

Sponsored by Rockforward! President's Circle Investors

Alpine Bank, Building Trades/Project First Rate, City of Rockford, Comcast, ComEd, First Rockford Group, Greater Rockford Airport Authority, Hamilton Sundstrand, IBEW/NECA, JP Morgan Chase, Maverick Media, Northern Illinois Building Contractors Association, OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center, Rockford Area REALTORS, Rockford Health System, Rockford Register Star, SwedishAmerican Health System, Village of Machesney Park, WIFR-TV, Winnebago County, Woodward, WQRF TV/WTVO TV, WREX-TV

Additional Sponsorship Opportunities Are Available  
Contact Mary Cacioppi at 815.969.4259 or  
[mcacioppi@rockfordil.com](mailto:mcacioppi@rockfordil.com)



Thank you to all Rockford Area Economic Development Council investors and volunteer leaders. Now, more than ever, your continued support is needed to ensure we successfully carry out the *Rockforward!* multi-year plan and realize its goals. Opportunity is on our doorstep, and we are poised to take advantage of it with the support, vision, and leadership from people like you.

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.

