

2018 Gives County and CEP a Strong Boost into 2019

In 2019, the Champaign Economic Partnership will be approaching its fifth year as a public/private partnership dedicated to strengthening the local economy.

Due to the CEP's success, the Champaign County commissioners and the City of Urbana have given thumbs up to continuing the partnership beyond the original five-year memorandum of understanding they signed to establish the CEP.

Urbana Mayor Bill Bean, a CEP board member, said, "This was a dream (County Commissioner) Steve Hess and I had in bringing together the county,

city and the villages to improve the viability of the business community and well-being and quali-

ty of life for the citizens of Champaign County."

Hess, also a CEP board member, adds, "Our partnership has grown to include a growing number of local companies, villages, local schools, Ohio Hi-Point Career Center, Urbana University and Clark State Community College, as well as regional economic development agencies.



"As we form new and stronger partnerships, we are better able to find the expertise, solutions and resources to achieve greater success for our community."

In 2018, 21 businesses supported the CEP's economic development mission as partner investors.

2018 Achievements

Notable economic devel-



The Cobblestone Hotel to open this fall in Urbana will look similar to this Cobblestone property in Orrville, Ohio.

opment achievements for the CEP and Champaign County include:

- Urbana, for the first time ever, made the top 100 U.S. micropolitan communities list for economic development, published by *Site Selection* magazine.
- A proposal moved forward in 2018 to build a Cobblestone Hotel near the intersection of Routes 68 and 55 in Urbana, financed by a group of local investors. Construction is expected to begin in spring 2019.
- A proposal is moving forward into the new year

to turn the former Urbana South and North Elementary Schools and Douglas Inn into 51 affordable senior living apartments. If all funding for the project is obtained this year, the CEP will act as agent to transfer the schools from the Urbana City School District to project developer Flaherty and Collins to begin renovation.

- The CEP – in partnership with Ohio Hi-Point Career Center, Clark State Community College, FASTLANE, DP&L and the Champaign County Manufacturers Council – created a business liaison position to help connect high school students, local schools and businesses to support workforce development needs.

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KTH: Expanding Footprint in Local Economy

KTH Parts Industries, Inc., which makes underbody structural frame components for cars, has become Champaign County's largest employer. "And we're probably one of the largest Tier 1 automotive suppliers in the country under one roof," says Chris Millice, Senior Vice President of General Administration. KTH, a Champion Level



Partner Investor of the CEP, started out in 1985 in a 250,000-square-foot facility, west of St. Paris, with about 250 associates. Thirty-seven expansions and 34 years later, KTH now employs more than 1,100 associates.

They work in a sprawling complex totaling 1.068 million square feet – alongside 1,085 robots.

Honda is KTH's primary customer. The company also supplies parts for Tesla.

Market demand in the competitive automotive industry is expected to be stagnant over

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The KTH Parts Industries, Inc. production facility, west of St. Paris, has grown to more than 1 million square feet.

KTH Expands Presence in County

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the next few years, Millice said. But KTH has been preparing for new opportunities as auto manufacturers shift more attention to electric vehicles.

For KTH, this means finding ways to make stronger, lighter frames at a more competitive price, Millice said. This year KTH will begin implementing new joining technology to manufacture these new frames.

Millice credits the CEP for helping KTH grow its footprint and workforce in Champaign County. "The CEP has always been 100 percent behind manufacturing. They're always coming out to see what we need in the way of workforce." Plus, he says, the CEP helped KTH obtain



A 3,000-ton servo transfer press that forms auto frame parts at KTH.

tax incentives through the Community Reinvestment Area program – to help make the expansions and job growth possible.

Like all manufacturers, KTH faces the challenge of recruiting production workers and employees with technical skills, to service presses and robots. As KTH's original workforce retires, this challenge will continue.

The CEP, through its partnerships with schools and employers like KTH, is working to prepare students for these opportunities.

Bailey Joins DDC Goodwill Trip to Japan

CEP Director Marcia Bailey completed a goodwill trip to Japan in November with a 10-member delegation, including Dayton Development Coalition, JobsOhio and county economic development leaders.

The purpose of the trip: to strengthen ties with Japanese companies that operate in Ohio and determine what they need to stay and grow here.

The group visited several manufacturing companies that operate in the Dayton region, including KTH Parts Industries and Parker Trutec in Champaign County. Japanese companies maintain 54 Dayton area facilities that employ about 16,700, Bailey said. KTH employs more than 1,000; Parker Trutec, more than 80; and Honda employs about 1,400 Champaign and Clark County residents.

"I thank KTH, Parker Trutec and Pioneer Electric Cooperative for sponsoring me and providing me the opportunity to represent Champaign County," Bailey said.



Marcia Bailey presents proclamations from the Champaign County commissioners and the State of Ohio to Atsushi Kaneda, President/CEO of H-One, parent company of KTH Parts Industries. Also pictured are Dave Cook, Honorary Consul of Japan for Ohio, and Mitch Heaton, DDC VP for Economic Development.

Coffey Joins CEP Board; Three Board Members Re-elected

A new member – Robin Coffey – has joined the CEP Board of Trustees, and three CEP Board



Coffey

members – Dana Booghier, Kyle Hall and Than Johnson – were re-elected in January to three-year terms that will expire at the end of 2021.

Coffey, communications and PR specialist for Memorial Health, is an at-large board member and served from 2010 to 2015 on the board of the Champaign County Community Improvement Corporation, the foundation of what is now the CEP.

Booghier, director and chief building official of Champaign County Building Regulations, is the board's building and zoning representative.

Hall, President of The Hall Company and a member of the Clark State Community College Board of Trustees, is the board's manufacturing representative.

Johnson, CEO of Champaign Residential Services, Inc. since 1982, is the board's health and social



Booghier



Hall



Johnson

services representative. He recently served on Gov. Mike DeWine's transition committee to select the new director of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities.



From left, during the JOBS Team visit to Rosewood Machine and Tool, are Mike Henman, Sales Engineer Manager for RMT; Tracey Kohl, Clark State Community College; Andrea Mitchell, Ohio Means Jobs Champaign County; Karen Chuvalas, Urbana University; and Jeff Helman, VP and Plant Manager, RMT.

JOBS Team Visits Rosewood Machine

The CEP JOBS (Jobs, Opportunities, Buildings and Space) Team made its latest visit to Rosewood Machine and Tool (RMT) Company in Rosewood.

The CEP created the JOBS Team last year to visit local businesses to discover what they need to help maintain or expand operations and jobs in the county.

RMT was founded in 1970 by Duane Helman, a machinist, programmer and farmer who opened the business around his interest in tractor repair. He added machining to the business in 1972, after ending tractor repair services.

His son Jeff Helman, now Vice President and Plant Manager, joined the company full-time in 1982. And Jeff's brother, Jon Helman, also Vice President and Plant Manager, joined in 1984.

The company has grown ever since. "Honda has been a major influence on us, along with KTH Parts Industries." RMT serves customers throughout Ohio and other states.

"We're not the average machine shop. Because of our size (about 45 employees), our pricing structure is higher than smaller companies," Jeff says. RMT serves as a single-source vendor, machining small or production quantities of parts, tooling, and making cus-

tom equipment. "We specialize in more difficult parts for difficult situations. That's our niche."

As it is for most businesses, workforce is a chief concern for RMT. Many of RMT's employees start as janitorial workers. That's because RMT likes to train and promote machinists from within.

"Everybody here is a success story. I started pushing a broom (at age 10) and now I'm a VP."

He appreciates that CEP has helped bring businesses and schools together to better prepare students for the workforce. RMT keeps in touch with local schools, he said. "We keep our eye out for kids who have a mechanical aptitude and may not be interested in college."

RMT offers internships for students. They start out part-time helping with custodial work, since machine operators must be 18. Through internships, he said, "you have a good shot of getting them here at 18."

He adds, "We're looking for that spark of talent, and we look for work ethic and students who can work with people."

Some parents need convincing about manufacturing careers. "There's a stigma: 'I don't want my kid working in a factory.'" But, he adds, "As a machinist you can earn more than many college graduates."

Videos Give Inside Look at Local Manufacturers

The CEP's new business liaison, Ashley Cook (see Summer 2018 CEP newsletter), is providing students and others in the community an inside look at local manufacturing facilities and the career opportunities they offer.



Ashley Cook

She's begun a series of videos that feature interviews with interns and employees and quick tours of the companies.

"We're using the videos so students and the younger generation can see what our local manufacturers make and what the facilities look like inside," Cook said. "They're very clean, organized and high tech – not what many people may picture when they think manufacturing."

She adds, "A lot of students don't know what products are made here and the jobs that are available."

Cook's first video features the Orbis Corporation in Urbana and interviews with:



Brandon Purk, who worked as a materials intern at Orbis before graduating from Urbana University. He was offered a full-time position with Orbis's corporate sales team in Oconomowoc, WI. The internship, he said, "changed my outlook about manufacturing. It's not factory work. There's ample opportunities for growth in this position."

Zach Zizzo, who is working at Orbis as a mechanical engineering intern while the company pays for his education at Clark State Community College. Zizzo graduated from Triad High School, where he was enrolled in the Advanced Manufacturing program offered by Ohio Hi-Point Career Center. At Orbis he is involved in continuous improvement and designs hot stamps for plastic totes the company makes.

You can watch the Orbis video on the CEP's YouTube channel (<https://youtu.be/jijbyvw7cBM>). Cook has also filmed videos of The Hall Company (https://youtu.be/_KW0pJgdWQ0), Rittal and Weidmann Electrical Technology.

The videos are being used by the companies and will be shown on 11 TV monitors that the CEP and its partners have placed in local schools and businesses (see Fall 2018 CEP newsletter).

2018 Provided County Economic Momentum into 2019

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- Manufacturing employment in Champaign County is up, from under 3,000 jobs in 2013 to more than 4,000 in 2017. Manufacturing pay in the county exceeds the Ohio average. Employment in the 19- to 24-year-old age group has increased to 9% of the total workforce – which signals success of efforts to encourage students to consider manufacturing.
 - The CEP launched the JOBS (Jobs, Opportunities, Buildings and Space) Team to visit local businesses to determine their needs for success and growth. (See Page 3 for the JOBS Team's latest visit.)
 - Clean up of the Q3/Johnson Manufacturing Company property on Miami Street is nearly complete. By early spring 2019, the City of Urbana will apply to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to OK the property for new business development. Several businesses have shown interest. Call the CEP to learn more about availability of this site.
 - The CEP's 17 successful economic development projects in 2018 included Sutphen, Inc.,
 - a fire apparatus manufacturer that opened a parts, repair and refurbishment center in the county.
 - New agribusiness projects included the opening of Nutrien Ag Solutions, expansion of Old Souls Farm's hydroponic operations, and purchase of the former Robert Rothschild Farm (RRF) property by Todd Woodruff, who is working on plans for a food processing business. Extension of a sanitary sewer line to the property, through a partnership of local government and RRF, made the property better suited to Woodruff's plans.
 - The CEP, with the help of partners, placed 11 TV monitors at schools and businesses to broadcast news on economic, workforce and community development.
 - The Moving Downtown Forward initiative launched in 2018 to promote development of apartments in the upper floors of downtown Urbana buildings. In connection with this, the City of Urbana is applying for a Community Development Block Grant for downtown development.
- Coming in 2019**
- The City of Urbana will



Pioneer Makes Donation to CEP

Todd Garrett, manager of community and government relations for Pioneer Electric Cooperative, presents a \$1,000 check to the CEP, represented by Mark Westfall, CEP Board agriculture representative, and Director Marcia Bailey. Garrett, a CEP board member, said the donation comes from the Sharing Success program of CoBank, a leading cooperative bank that serves agribusinesses and rural infrastructure providers, such as Pioneer.

- develop the South Main Street Corridor Plan to help map the future of economic development from Powell Avenue to Campground Road. The plan will be based on public input.
- The city also will be conducting the South High Street Corridor Study to look for opportunities to improve the street for pedestrians, bicycle traffic, drainage and parking.
- The Sowles Hotel building on Scioto Street will undergo development for office and retail space.
- The CEP will help St. Paris market its enterprise zone to encourage economic development. And the Village of Mechanicsburg has asked the CEP to help set up an enterprise zone to spur economic development there.
- Urbana was granted a Certified Opportunity Zone (COZ) – roughly the northeast quadrant of the city up to Salem Township – through the federal COZ program, which grants tax incentives to promote development in economically distressed areas. The CEP will promote this in 2019.



CEP Director Marcia Bailey presents an "open" flag to Joyce Thornburg Cummins, who opened Montego Designs Unlimited with Rob Kennedy at 114 Scioto St., Urbana. The shop specializes in décor, primitives and antiques.

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