



The December 2008 Open for Business report highlights projects and related announcements that will assist with the creation of new jobs and the preservation of a significant number of existing jobs.

Firm announces plans to hire up to 40 engineers for new West Virginia office

Kentucky-based Energy Management & Services Company (EMS) plans to open a new office in West Virginia. The company intends to secure a location in Putnam County's Teays Valley, said Charleston branch manager Robert Tomblin. EMS has started conducting interviews to hire 30 to 40 engineers within 12 to 18 months. The firm provides project management, engineering, surveying, construction management, inspection and other technical services for oil and gas, utilities, chemical and industrial companies.

Preparation process gets under way to fill 340 jobs in McDowell County prison

Region 1 WorkForce West Virginia and the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) are partnering to help job seekers get ready to apply for posts at the McDowell County prison. Now more than 70 percent complete, the new \$224 million federal prison at the Indian Ridge Industrial Park in Welch is scheduled to open in early 2010. The first job vacancy announcements will be posted on www.usajobs.gov by April 2009. Positions will include accountants, automotive repair supervisors, cooks, correctional officers, dentists, facility managers, medical doctors, nurses, recreational specialists, secretaries and warehouse supervisors.

To access the BOP fact sheet, visit <http://www.region1workforcwestvirginia.org>. To receive information about preparatory classes and other information, contact Samantha Reed at 304-255-3932 or sreed@r1workforcewv.org.

Suddenlink opens regional call center, adds jobs, in Wood County

Suddenlink Communications recently opened its \$3.5 million regional call center in Parkersburg, Wood County. The company built the 18,000-square-foot facility to replace the existing center it had outgrown. The new call center will serve customers in a five-state area. The company expects to add 33 jobs in 2008 and 29 more in 2009. When fully staffed, the new center is expected to employ as many as 220 employees.

WVU Hospitals to build new laundry center, add 20 jobs

West Virginia University Hospitals has begun site preparation for a 40,000-square-foot laundry center in the Morgantown Industrial Park. The \$7.8 million facility will process 15 million pounds of linen a year and create 20 new jobs for a total employment of 70. The center, scheduled to open in July 2009, will also process laundry for United Hospital Center in Clarksburg, St. Joseph's in Buckhannon, Camden Clark in Parkersburg and Jefferson and City Hospitals in the Eastern Panhandle.

West Virginia universities recruit eminent scholars

West Virginia University and Marshall University have appointed the first scientists enlisted through the state's Eminent Scholars Recruitment and Enhancement program. Gene repair pioneer Dr. Eric Kmiec will become the first director and lead research scientist for the Marshall University Institute for Interdisciplinary Research (MIIR). Dr. J. Michael Rupert has joined the WVU the Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center to fill the new Jo and Ben Statler Eminent Scholar and Chair in Breast Cancer Research.

The Eminent Scholars program was created in 2007 to enable the state's two research universities to attract scholars with demonstrated research competitiveness, support research infrastructure and provide graduate fellowships.

FastTrac TechVenture high-tech entrepreneurship course starts Jan. 28

FastTrac TechVenture entrepreneurship classes start Jan. 28, 2009, in the South Charleston Technology Center and continue once a week for 10 weeks. The facilitator is Greg Clutter, director of commercialization for the Mid-Atlantic Technology, Research and Innovation Center (MATRIC). FastTrac TechVenture educates entrepreneurs in high technology and life science industries in the principles behind business success. The curriculum covers starting, operating, funding and growing a technology or life science-based business. In West Virginia, the program is offered by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation and by the INNOVA Commercialization Group, an initiative of the West Virginia High Technology Consortium Foundation (WVHTC Foundation). The West Virginia Small Business Development Center offers assistance with as much as 75 percent of the tuition. For more information, e-mail pgregg@wvhtf.org or visit www.fasttrac.org.

WVEDA approves \$10 million loan for Wood County headquarters

The West Virginia Economic Development Authority approved a \$10 million loan to Highmark West Virginia Inc., doing business as Mountain State Blue Cross Blue Shield. The 15-year loan will finance the 127,000-square-foot corporate headquarters building being constructed in Parkersburg, Wood County. The largest health care insurer in the state, Mountain State Blue Cross Blue Shield has a presence in all 55 counties.

Japan Chamber of Commerce presents award to Sen. Rockefeller

The Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) presented West Virginia's U.S. Sen. Jay Rockefeller with the "Eagle on the World" award. The honor was in recognition of the senator's efforts to build partnerships between West Virginia and Japanese industries. The event, held in New York City, was attended by leading Japanese business people, West Virginians from the Discover the REAL West Virginia Foundation and the West Virginia Development Office. Also in attendance were Toyota's president and representatives of the Kureha Corp. plastics plant, which is under construction in Belle, W.Va.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund helps to bring water to Wood County

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) lent \$5.5 million to Claywood Park Public Service District in Wood County to help extend sewer service to 339 new customers in the Red Hill area, and upgrade the existing wastewater treatment plant. In October, the CWSRF made more than \$3 million in payments to communities for sewer construction projects.

Hybrid buses coming to the Kanawha Valley

The Kanawha Valley Regional Transportation Authority (KVRTA) and the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) have partnered to bring two hybrid transit buses to West Virginia. The hybrid diesel-electric buses are quieter, more fuel efficient and less polluting than conventional diesel buses. The project will be the first of its kind in the state.

The DEP's Division of Air Quality secured federal funding through the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act, which will help offset the approximately \$200,000 cost difference between a conventional diesel transit bus and a hybrid bus that couples a diesel-fueled engine with an electric motor.

Two facilities open in Boone County

The Hatfield-McCoy Trails Authority opened a new Trailhead/Retail Center and Welcome Center on Corridor G. The \$750,000 facility sells trail permits and retail goods on-site and ships merchandise sold through its Internet gear shop on <http://www.trailsheaven.com>. The new center employs two full-time and six part-time workers. **Massey Energy** opened its new \$13 million regional headquarters on Corridor G (U.S. 119) in Boone County. More than 150 employees work in the 51,000-square-foot building. The three-story building was constructed on a reclaimed mine site.

New businesses open on West Side Charleston

Charleston's West Side Main Street recently opened several new businesses. **Balance Clothing Co.** created 10 jobs to provide screen-printing and design for clothing and other media. Bakery **Risin' Dough** has four employees who whip up cookies, cinnamon rolls and other tasty delights. **Centered Pilates** studio conducts individual and group Pilates classes and employs four people. **Capitol Clay Arts Co.** created two jobs and offers pottery supplies including kilns, wheels, glazes, raw materials and retail clay art. **The Wooden Spoon Appalachian Creamery** has two employees who create award-winning sorbet. Nonprofit organization **The Robin's Nest** employs two people to provide training for developmentally disabled individuals.

Aegis wins new client, celebrates 10th anniversary in Randolph County

Aegis Communications in Elkins has been awarded a new contract with American Express. The company has 425 full-time employees. Aegis handles inbound customer service calls for Fortune 500 companies worldwide. Aegis also has operations in Fairmont, W.Va., Arizona, Florida, Missouri, New York and Texas.

New Barbour County mortuary creates six jobs

Valley Bend in Barbour County is home to the new Randolph Funeral Home and Cremation Services Inc. The mortuary offers traditional funeral services and products. The new establishment created six jobs.

USA TODAY recognizes West Virginia town for high mortgage-free home ownership

Mercer County's Bluefield was named among 17 locations around the United States that have the highest share — 50 percentage or more — of mortgage-free homeowners. The newspaper's analysis showed that most of the areas with high percentages of zero-mortgage holders are in small towns scattered across the country.

Cabell Huntington Home Health ranked among Top 100

Cabell Huntington Hospital's Home Health Department has been listed among the 2008 Homecare Elite Top 100 for the second consecutive year. More than 8,222 agencies across the nation are reviewed each year. The ranking of Medicare-certified home health care providers is compiled by the healthcare information services company OCS Inc. and health news provider DecisionHealth. The data is based on an analysis of performance measures in quality outcomes, quality improvement and financial performance.

West Virginia destinations named among "Best of Outdoors"

Several West Virginia attractions received top marks from Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine. The Mountain State took top ranking in these categories: Favorite Paddling Event: Gauley Fest, Summersville, Nicholas County; Best Climbing Crag: New River Gorge, Fayette County; Best Ski Run: Sawmill Glades, Snowshoe Mountain, Pocahontas County; Favorite Ski Resort: Canaan Valley, Tucker County; Best Terrain Park: Mountaineer Terrain Park, Silver Creek, Pocahontas County; and Best Mountain Bike Trail, Tea Creek Mountain, Pocahontas County.

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