



The February 2009 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.

Software developer expands operations, adds 80 jobs, in Harrison County

Software developer and defense contractor Platinum Solutions will expand operations at its Bridgeport facility. The company plans to hire at least 80 new employees to fill technical and support positions by July 2009. Platinum recently won a federal contract that led to the expansion and may result in additional opportunities in the next five years. For more information, visit www.platinumsolutions.com.

WVEDA approves \$98,523 loan for Brooke County firm

The West Virginia Economic Development Authority gave final approval to one loan during its January meeting:

- Rigg PCC Limited Liability Company, \$98,523, to purchase and install equipment in its facility in Wellsburg, Brooke County. Rigg provides printing and coating services to manufacturers in the paper and packaging industry. The start-up company expects to employ eight workers after one year, and up to 15 after three years.

Bank plans Feb. 3 fete to celebrate new location in Wyoming County

First Community Bank plans will host a celebration on Feb. 3 to mark the grand opening of its financial center at its new location on Howard Street in Mullens. The reception will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in its renovated building in the downtown historic district. With the move to its new location, First Community Bank increased its employment from three full-and part-time employees to five.

Answering service brings 20 jobs to Cabell County

A&A Telephone Answering Service opened its operating center in Huntington, creating 20 full- and part-time jobs. The service company handles calls for thousands of businesses nationwide. This is the company's first location in West Virginia. A&A officials expect to open a second location in West Virginia early next year, projecting a capital investment of \$1.2 million in the state. The company operates in 12 states.

Kaeser Compressors opens new facility in Putnam County

Kaeser Compressors is leasing a 5,000-square-foot warehouse and distribution facility at the Meeks Business Park in Scott Depot. Kaeser is one of the world's leading suppliers of air system technology and related equipment. Headquartered in Germany, the company employs more than 3,000 people worldwide.

Direct flights from Charleston to New York to take off in April

Effective April 8, American Eagle Airlines, the regional affiliate of American Airlines, will offer direct flights from Charleston to New York City. American Eagle will operate 37-seat Embraer ERJ-135 jets, making it the first airline to provide jet service between West Virginia and New York City. Gov. Joe Manchin, accompanied by several state and county officials, made the announcement during a press conference at the airport.

State makes first Linked Deposit Program small business loan

The first Linked Deposit Program loan in West Virginia was completed by First Exchange Bank in Monongalia County, retaining five jobs. The loan was processed for Mason Marketing LLC, doing business as Mountaineer Yellow Pages, to produce a comprehensive telephone directory for Marion, Preston and Monongalia counties. The Linked Deposit Program provides reduced-interest loans up to \$250,000 to qualified small businesses. The seven-year loans are obtained through banks approved by the state.

Marshall University receives \$50,000 from CSX Corp. for transportation research

Railroad operator CSX Corp. donated \$50,000 to Marshall University, Huntington, as part of the state's West Virginia Research Trust, also known as Bucks for Brains. The contribution will support transportation research conducted by the Nick J. Rahall II Appalachian Transportation Institute (RTI) through Rail-SORCE (Railroad Safety and Operations Research Center of Excellence). The Bucks for Brains initiative allocates \$15 million to Marshall University and \$35 million to West Virginia University as a research endowment trust fund. The schools have five years to match the state funds by raising an equal sum in private and corporate donations.

WVU's Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center appoints Eminent Scholars Researcher

The Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center at West Virginia University (WVU) has named J. Michael Ruppert to fill the newly created Jo & Ben Statler Eminent Scholar Chair in Breast Cancer Research. Before joining WVU, he was professor of medicine and co-director of the program in cancer cell biology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Ruppert's research investigates breast cancer tumor suppressor genes and transcription factors. Ruppert is the second researcher recruited to the state through the Eminent Scholars Recruitment and Enhancement initiative.

Fortune's 100 Best Companies to Work For includes West Virginia companies

Fortune's list of 100 Best Companies to Work For includes three firms with West Virginia offices. The list names Alcon Laboratories Inc., Huntington; Chesapeake Energy, Charleston; and Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe's Global Operations Center, Wheeling.

Huntington Steel and Supply Company receives AISC Quality Certification

Huntington Steel and Supply Company has received the coveted American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC) Quality Certification. AISC Certification sets a standard for the steel industry. Huntington Steel is one of only three companies in West Virginia to receive the certification.

Study shows more West Virginia grads finding work in the state

More graduates from West Virginia colleges are staying and earning more money in the state. The results come from a joint study by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and the West Virginia University College of Business and Economics. The study shows that 47 percent of graduates had employment in West Virginia in 2007, a 1 percent increase over the year before. Their salaries rose by more than 4 percent between 2006 and 2007 to an average of \$40,000.

Morgantown invests in projects to enhance commercial district

The City of Morgantown, private developers and Main Street Morgantown are carrying out a series of projects to enhance the town's commercial district. Projects include \$1 million for the recently-completed third phase of the Streetscape on the 200 block of High Street; \$250,000 for a digital marquee for the renovated Historic Metropolitan Theatre; \$75,000 for an updated downtown strategic plan; \$25,000 for a new mobile camera system to support city safety and security; and \$5,000 for year-round street tree lighting. Developers have invested \$600,000 for the recently-completed renovation of the South Side Station commercial building. Still under construction are the \$10 million Marina Tower and the \$22 million Event Center in the Wharf District. The 80,000-square-foot Event Center will provide space for events and groups including West Virginia Public Theatre.

#