



The December 2006 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.

- **Eastern Panhandle company selected to develop motor for missile defense system**
Raytheon Co. has selected Alliant Techsystems Inc. (ATK) of Rocket Center, W.Va., to develop the booster motor for the flexible, affordable and lethal Stunner Interceptor, an element of the Short Range Missile Defense Program. Raytheon officials said ATK Tactical Systems' composite booster motor solution for the Stunner Interceptor supports Raytheon's strategy of innovation in missile defense.
- **Allegheny Energy to expand investments in electricity transmission in West Virginia**
Allegheny Energy Inc. plans to expand investments in high-voltage electricity wires to complement its utilities and power plants. The Greenburg, Pa., company has proposed an \$850 million power line that would carry electricity from coal-powered plants in areas including West Virginia to urban centers such as Philadelphia.
- **Gov. Manchin awards \$10.8 million in Small Cities Block Grants**
Gov. Joe Manchin awarded more than \$10.8 million in Small Cities Block Grant funds to continue 14 infrastructure and community development projects that were approved for funding in 2005. The commitment leverages an additional \$32 million from other sources and will benefit more than 13,400 residents. The funding brings substantial upgrades and expansion to water treatment and wastewater treatment facilities in 13 counties, making it possible to provide additional economic development and housing opportunities.
- **Charleston's Yeager Airport expands jet service from Cincinnati and to Myrtle Beach**
Beginning in March 2007, Yeager Airport and Southern Skyways will offer seasonal nonstop jet service from Charleston, W.Va., to Myrtle Beach, S.C., and Cincinnati. The new service is important for West Virginia travelers who frequent Myrtle Beach, but also for the entire state as it could mean a greater boost for tourism and economic development, said Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va. The Boeing 737-300 aircraft seats 148 passengers and will fly between Cincinnati and Charleston for \$39 each way and Charleston and Myrtle Beach for \$99 each way.
- **West Virginia reveals new state tourism ad campaign to record number of conference attendees**
More than 300 tourism representatives from across West Virginia joined Gov. Manchin at the Governor's Conference on Tourism Nov. 27-29 in Charleston. Officials from the state Division of Tourism presented the annual marketing plan, which announces a 2007 branding campaign that targets key metropolitan travel markets such as Pittsburgh; Columbus, Ohio; Charlotte, N.C.; Richmond, Va.; Baltimore; and Washington.

West Virginia's tourism industry employs 41,000 and has an economic impact of \$3.4 billion annually. Last year, the state saw a 7.1 percent increase in overnight tourists. The 300-plus registered attendees set a new record for attendance at the annual state tourism conference.

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- **New company adds 31 jobs at Bluefield manufacturing facility**

IPM Technologies will occupy the former EIMCO facility in Bluefield, W.Va. Shannon Remines, CEO of a group of associated companies including Bluefield Gear and Machine, Industrial Plating and Machine of Princeton, IPM Technologies and American Babbitt Bearings based in Huntington, joined Gov. Joe Manchin in the announcement.

Under Remines leadership, IPM Technologies added a complete heat treat department to complement the group's gear shop and machine shop. This venture has added 31 new jobs for a total of 157 in all the associated companies. When complete, the project is expected to grow to 200 skilled positions.

- **West Virginia highly visible at global corporate real estate summit**

West Virginia sponsored the business center at the recent CoreNet Global Summit in Orlando, Fla., providing exposure for the state to the nearly 2,500 corporate real estate executives and site selection consultants who attended the four-day event.

The Wheeling (W.Va.) Regional Economic Development Partnership, the Jefferson County Development Authority and the Charleston Area Alliance joined the West Virginia Development Office in hosting the center. West Virginia's "Open For Business" message and Web site were prominent on the 30 computers in center's Internet café, while the team networked with the real estate consultants and informed them about the state's target industry clusters, its work force and the improving business climate.

- **Economist predicts continued job growth in West Virginia**

At the 13th annual Economic Outlook Conference in November, West Virginia University economist George Hammond said the state's economy has added about 27,000 jobs in the past three years and that job growth should continue to improve in 2007, keeping pace with the national average. The natural resources, mining and construction sectors have added 12,000 jobs to the economy the last three years, while the goods-producing sector accounted for about one-third of the growth.

Coal mining production has risen significantly since 2003 and natural gas activity is up about 1,000 jobs since 2000, with continued production expansion in the future, he said. Hammond predicts continued growth in the state's tourism, transportation equipment, aircraft manufacturing and wood products industries. He said there is hope the state's current tax modernization plans will help future economic forecasts, as well.

- **Virginia Gov. Kaine joins West Virginia Gov. Manchin in call for cross-border cooperation**

West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin shared the spotlight with Virginia Gov. Tim Kaine in Bluefield, W.Va., for a town hall meeting about the two Virginias, the first time for such a discussion in 84 years. Local officials from Bluefield, Va., and Bluefield, W.Va., joined area residents to express the need for cooperation across state borders. They discussed education, infrastructure and modern communications and called for regional cooperation.

- **BPB site work progresses in Marshall County**

Site preparation for a \$100 million-plus wallboard manufacturing plant in Marshall County is nearly 80 percent complete. A spokesman for BPB, the company building the plant, said more than 2 million cubic yards of dirt have been moved and 400 steel pilings have been embedded into the ground to stabilize the site. The plant is being built on a 100-acre site along W.Va. Route 2 between American Electric Power's Kammer Mitchell plant and Fish Creek. It will use recycled synthetic gypsum captured from AEP's production process and is scheduled to operate in late 2007. The plant will employ 100 workers. The West Virginia Economic Development Authority, West Virginia Development Office, the Governor's Office, the Marshall County Commission and the Regional Economic Development partnership are involved in the project.

- **Governor and West Virginia Chamber share state's progress with New York business officials**

Gov. Joe Manchin, the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce and the West Virginia Development Office in November hosted a breakfast in New York that highlighted West Virginia's economic progress and growth.

Business officials with West Virginia connections, local West Virginia graduates and representatives from the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of New York Inc. joined the governor at the breakfast briefing. Gov. Manchin highlighted the state's improved business climate and enhanced fiscal management.

Steve Roberts, president of the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce, said the New York event is a "relationship marketing event" designed to build closer relationships with business people in metropolitan centers who have West Virginia ties with a goal to foster business opportunities. "We want to share with our friends in New York the news of the important steps and progress that has been made to improve West Virginia's business climate," Roberts said. "We also want to remind them of West Virginia's many assets including affordable, reliable energy sources, terrific quality of life, low crime rate and dedicated workforce."

The Wall Street Journal wrote about West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin's special session for tax cuts in a Nov. 24 editorial.

- **International law firm partners with Wheeling company for support services**

The law firm Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe is partnering with Williams Lea, a corporate information solutions company, to coordinate all of Orrick's word processing, transcription production services and document services work in Wheeling, W.Va., at the firm's Global Operations Center.

Officials from Williams Lea said the partnership should improve Orrick's ability to service clients and will provide a base from which to market support services to other law firms and other professional services businesses. Orrick will continue to provide other support services, including technology, finance, human resources, marketing, benefits and Web engineering from Wheeling.

Williams Lea is the leading global provider of corporate information solutions, and employs 6,500 worldwide. Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliff LLP is an international law firm with more than 750 lawyers in North America, Europe and Asia. The company employs 131 people at the Wheeling Global Operations Center. Both companies anticipate that this expansion will create a greater demand for the kinds of jobs that have been created at the Wheeling facility.

- **North-central West Virginia benefits from fall tourists**

Tourists enjoy driving West Virginia's country roads during fall, and staff at local visitors' bureaus said travelers benefit north-central West Virginia economically. Cindi Mason, program coordinator for the Grafton-Taylor County Convention and Visitors Bureau, said more tourists seem to have come through Taylor County this past fall than in previous years. Many tourists came to drive across U.S. routes 50 or 250 to see the fall scenery, she said. Cindy Hunter, executive director at the Greater Bridgeport Conference and Visitors Center, said among the scenic paths attracting tourists is U.S. Route 50 through Arthurdale, one of Eleanor Roosevelt's projects during the Great Depression. Travel spending in the state has increased by 11.4 percent per year since 2000.

- **State Small Business Development Center helps nearly 300 clients in November**

The West Virginia Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provided 567 hours of counseling and training to 298 clients last month. The SBDC has provided 1,186 hours of counseling and training to 604 clients since the beginning of this fiscal year, Oct. 1, helping to create or retain 79 jobs. SBDC staff trained 129 people at 20 events in November and trained 295 people at 40 events this fiscal year. Five loans totaling \$219,100 were approved in November. Ten loans totaling more than \$1.6 million have been approved year-to-date. New customer satisfaction was 100 percent in November and for the year.

- **WVSBDC client honored by Slow Food USA for preserving the pawpaw**

Harpers Ferry, W.Va., resident R. Neal Peterson persuaded Slow Food USA to enter the pawpaw into its Ark of Taste, a program dedicated to revitalizing foods at the risk of extinction. Peterson, a commercial pawpaw grower, received the organization's \$2,500 Betsy Lydon Award at a dinner featuring pawpaw foods prepared by Chef Peter Hoffman of the Savoy Restaurant in Manhattan.

- **State foresters expect busy holiday tree sales**

West Virginia's forestry industry has a direct impact in all 55 counties, creating an estimated 30,000 jobs and \$4 billion overall economic impact each year. The state's substantial Christmas tree industry is gearing up for another busy holiday season. Tree farms specializing in "choose-and-cut" Christmas trees experience brisk sales starting the day after Thanksgiving, and many farms see customers up to closing time on Christmas Eve. A trip to a choose-and-cut Christmas tree farm has become a tradition for families throughout the Mountain State who relish the opportunity to pick just the right tree for their holiday celebrations. Many farms offer a variety of seasonal products including wreaths and boughs – all West Virginia grown. West Virginia is the third-most-forested state, with nearly 80 percent covered in forests. It has more than 12 million acres of forested land.

- **Grant County pushes ahead with \$2 million arts center project**

The Grant County Community Arts Center, a 275-seat auditorium unique to the region, is being built adjacent to the county library in Petersburg, W.Va. The more than \$2 million dollar project is a federal, state and community effort. The library owned the land on which the building will be situated. The center of the building, which is the main auditorium, is being completed first. The outside perimeter of the auditorium will house restrooms, corridors, workshops and dressing rooms and there will be a room designated to display artifacts about the history of the area.

- **Canadian company acquires two hydro power facilities, resulting in significant reinvestment**
Brookfield Power of Canada has completed its purchase of two West Virginia hydroelectric power generation facilities, resulting in a significant reinvestment in the facilities and the retention of hundreds of jobs. The Quebec-based energy company reached purchase agreements with Alloy Power LLC and West Virginia Alloy LLC in which Brookfield Power would acquire Alloy's Hawks Nest and Glen Ferris hydroelectric generating stations on the New River and Kanawha River, respectively. Together, the Hawks Nest and Glen Ferris generating stations have a total installed capacity of 107 megawatts and produce an average of 526 gigawatt hours of electricity annually.
- **Up-and-coming young professionals find support in Charleston**
The Charleston Area Alliance's Young Professionals group is in its infancy, but is already building excitement among emerging business professionals in the capital city. The Charleston Area Alliance brought up the idea of a young professionals group in October 2005. Executive Vice President Matt Ballard, soon to be the Alliance's president, started the group. The first meeting comprised just six people but the group has grown to nearly 90 members on its mailing list. The group meets monthly and has formed official committees.
- **Economic Development Authority approves \$800,000 to help Mercer business**
T & N Electric Motor Exchange Inc. of Bluefield, W.Va., received preliminary approval on an \$800,000 loan to purchase and install equipment at its manufacturing facility near Bluefield in Mercer County. T & N sells, repairs and manufactures electric motors used in power generation, coal extraction, coal preparation and steel production. This expansion is expected to create eight new jobs within a year, and as many as 28 after three years.

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