



The October 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.

Alcon Inc. breaks ground for \$25 million expansion in Cabell County

Swiss eye care company Alcon Inc. is investing \$25 million to build a 74,000-square-foot expansion of its manufacturing site in Huntington. The expansion is expected to create more than 350 jobs over the next 12 years. Currently Alcon employs 729 workers to manufacture plastic lenses that replace natural lenses removed during cataract surgery and surgical delivery systems for cataract operations. The new plant is expected to be operational by 2011. The expansion will allow the West Virginia plant to remain the largest intraocular lens manufacturing facility in the world.

Gov. Joe Manchin met with Alcon managers last summer to show the state's support for the expansion. The West Virginia Development Office and the Huntington Area Development Council worked with the company to facilitate the expansion. Asked why the company chose to expand in West Virginia, Alcon executives cited the support from agencies and local institutions, the highly skilled work force and available acreage in close proximity to its existing manufacturing plant.

TRG to add 200 jobs in Kanawha County

TRG Customer Service has announced plans to hire more than 200 new employees for technical and product support positions. The company also plans to invest \$250,000 in its operation center in South Charleston. TRG, formerly Telespectrum Worldwide Inc., provides customer care, technical support and telesales services to Fortune 500 companies in the telecommunications, financial services, technology, health care and utility industries. The call center currently employs more than 200 workers.

Tech firm in Pocahontas County wins SBIR contract with U.S. Army

Quiet Skies LLC in Arbovale, adjacent to the National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) has been selected by the United States Army for a Phase I study called "Radio Astronomy based design for an Ultra LNA system." The project combines research experience from Radio Astronomy projects with new cryogenic cooler to create ultra high sensitivity radio receiver systems. The systems are used to receive high data rate signals from spacecraft. Quiet Skies received the contract through the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. The SBIR and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR)

programs are federal initiatives that provide more than \$1 billion in research and development grants and contracts each year to small businesses to develop new products and services based on advanced technologies. The West Virginia Small Business Development Center assists the state's small technology businesses with SBIR/STTR proposal preparation workshops, confidential consulting and grants. For more information on Quiet Skies, visit <http://www.frontiernet.net/~quietskies>.

WVDEP Clean Water Revolving Fund lends \$22.5 million to two communities

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection's Clean Water State Revolving Fund recently lent more than \$18 million to the Elk Valley Public Service District in Kanawha County to upgrade its aging wastewater treatment plant and pumping station. The fund also lent \$4.5 million to Hancock County's Public Service District to construct wastewater collection lines and a sewage treatment plant in northern Hancock County. Both loans are interest-free. The Hancock County project will serve an estimated 680 residential customers. The Elk Valley project will provide capacity for growth in the future and will curtail excessive infiltration into the sewer system during storm events.

West Virginia chapter named lead for Red Cross disaster call center

The Central West Virginia Chapter of the American Red Cross has been named Lead Chapter for the National Response Center Enterprise (RCE), the core call center that answers the 1-866-GET-INFO line for citizens across the United States affected by disasters. Fourteen new jobs have been created as a result of the designation. The call center operates 24 hours a day from the Central West Virginia Chapter headquarters in Cross Lanes. Trained call agents provide disaster victims with information about where they can obtain Red Cross services, such as shelter locations and feeding sites. The Central West Virginia chapter will also manage a remote network of 29 Red Cross chapters across the country to activate additional call centers in times of high call volume. During large scale events, such as the recent hurricanes, the Response Center Enterprise assists more than 1,000 disaster victims a day.

West Virginia companies on Inc. Magazine list of fastest-growing companies

Two West Virginia companies are included in this year's Inc. 500 Fastest Growing Private Companies in America. Charleston's beBetter Network took the 15th position. Fairmont's Innovative Management & Technology Services ranked 323rd. BeBetter Network also ranked at the top of Inc. Magazine's 2008 list of Top 100 Health Companies in the United States. BeBetter offers health and wellness support to public and private groups.

Innovative Management & Technology Services provides advanced computer services to the federal government and leading integrators. Innovative Management provides systems engineering support for the FBI's next generation identification system, which will expand the federal fingerprint system to include palm print, iris, and facial recognition capabilities.

West Virginia University Hospitals opens new 24-bed step-down unit in Morgantown

West Virginia University Hospitals recently opened Eight Northeast, its new 24-bed step-down unit. Bridging the gap between standard patient rooms and intensive care, the step-down unit is the largest in the hospital. The new unit offers features such as mechanical “patient lifts” in every room for nurses to help patients move around, larger beds in four bariatric rooms outfitted for larger patients, and five separate nursing stations positioned to enable nurses to monitor patients more efficiently. Plans call for each nurse to have no more than three patients under his or her care. WVU Hospitals is currently recruiting more nurses to complete staffing on the floor. Over the past year, WVU Hospitals has hired almost 1,000 new employees.

West Virginia Education Portal receives national accolades

The new West Virginia Education Portal recently won the 2008 Best of Web Special Award and the 2008 Digital Education Achievement Award. The awards recognize the portal's innovative approach to integrating more than 900 education resources into one centralized starting point within the state's official Web site (<http://www.wv.gov>). The West Virginia Education Portal (<http://www.education.wv.gov>) is the result of the work of the 21st Century Jobs Cabinet. Built without tax dollars, the portal was the product of a public-private partnership between West Virginia Interactive and the state. West Virginia Interactive works with government agencies to build and manage interactive online services.

Martinsburg's JRTI receives \$95,305 auto technology training grant

The James Rumsey Technical Institute (JRTI) recently received a \$95,305 automotive technology grant to train members of the Panhandle Garage Owners Association (PGOA) and high school and post-secondary automotive technology students. JRTI is the area's designated technical school for Berkeley, Morgan and Jefferson counties. PGOA received a 2003 Small Business Work Force (SBWF) award and partnered with JRTI to provide 1,280 hours of high-end technical training for 32 service technicians in the Eastern Panhandle. This unusual collaboration among small businesses and a local technical institution drew the attention of Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito, who helped secure the new automotive technology grant.

West Virginia exhibits in IMTS 2008

The West Virginia Development Office exhibited in the Manufacturing Technology Show (IMTS) trade show Sept. 8-13 in Chicago. Ranked among the largest trade shows in the world, IMTS attracted more than 90,000 visitors related to the automotive, aerospace, machine tool and other manufacturing sectors. Local representatives of the Jackson, Roane, and Jefferson County Development Authorities and the Regional Economic Development Partnership joined the Development Office in participating in the event.

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