



The September 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.

J.D. Irving, Limited to open first U.S. Equipment Division in W.Va.

Global corporation J.D. Irving, Limited has chosen Kanawha County in West Virginia as the location for its first Equipment Division in the United States. The new division, scheduled to open in October of this year, represents a \$20 million initial investment. The JDI Equipment Division will create 15 new jobs initially and a total of 50 within 12-24 months. The new positions include crane operators, mechanics and engineers. JDI has operations in Eastern Canada (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador) and the United States. The company's business units include forest products, transportation, shipbuilding, retail, industrial equipment and construction services and consumer products.

LDH Energy purchase of Big Sandy coal dock expected to create 13 jobs

The Big Sandy River Dock in Kenova has been purchased by LDH Energy Cyrus River Terminal LLC, a subsidiary of Louis Dreyfus Highbridge Energy LLC (LDH Energy). LDH Energy expects to begin operations in September and anticipates creating 13 jobs.

The parent company is an independent merchant energy firm with offices in the United States, Canada, London, Shanghai and Singapore. The coal facility was purchased from Kanawha River Terminals LLC. The Big Sandy River Dock provides an annual throughput capacity of five million tons and a ground storage capacity of 600,000 tons. It has capacity to handle 13 barges and features a 500-tons-per-hour barge off-loading system.

Berzaci to produce 25 jobs with \$4 million gelato ingredient plant in Jefferson County

Gelato manufacturer Berzaci is opening a manufacturing plant in Bardane Industrial Park in Jefferson County. The \$4 million investment, scheduled to open in September, will create 25 new jobs. Berzaci produces gelato, pastry and other dessert ingredients. Gelato is an Italian word for ice cream.

WVEDA approves loans to two companies

During its Aug. meeting, the West Virginia Economic Development Authority (WVEDA) gave final approval to two loans:

- ThreeSquare, LLC, \$329,275 to renovate a three-story building in downtown Martinsburg in Berkeley County. ThreeSquare was formed in 2002 to purchase the Eastern Panhandle Innovation Center (EPIC), a high-tech incubator designed to support new, high-growth entrepreneurial companies. The real estate company currently employs 16 people and expects that figure to increase up to 29 employees after three years.
- Control Point Machining and Fabrication, Inc., \$427,500 to buy the assets of Yeadley Engineering in Charleston, Kanawha County. Control Point will be a machining and fabrication business specializing in sales and services to industrial markets and coal producers. Control Point will retain the employees of Yeadley, which has provided machining and fabrication services in the area since 1965.

West Virginia Small Business Division helps 184 clients in July

The West Virginia Small Business Development Center (WVSBDC) provided 500 hours of counseling to 184 clients in July. The division trained 41 people at seven training events and approved 14 loans totaling more than \$222,650. Since October 1, 2007, WVSBDC has served 1,055 clients, provided 1,800 hours of counseling and trained 1,078 participants in 126 training events. So far this fiscal year, the agency has provided 127 small businesses with loans over \$12.8 million. WVSBDC is a division of the West Virginia Development Office and works with colleges, universities and other host institutions to provide business consulting and technical assistance at Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) statewide. The SBDC is a program supported by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis.

WORKFORCE West Virginia assists 91 businesses with training programs

Since the start of Fiscal Year 2008 in July through June 30, the Governor's Guaranteed Workforce Program has provided reimbursement for approved custom-designed training programs for 69 new and existing West Virginia businesses. The \$2,474,036 in awards were used to train 6,182 employees. Another 9,843 workers were positively affected from those training awards.

The Competitive Improvement Program, funded by the Appalachian Regional Commission, awarded \$250,000 in training funds to 22 small- and medium-sized West Virginia businesses. The program enabled 1,272 employees to receive training; 1,441 employees were positively affected. The average overall wage increase for employees after training was \$1.48.

Allegheny Energy to locate \$50 million headquarters in Marion County

Allegheny Energy announced plans to locate its new \$50 million transmission operations headquarters in the I-79 High Technology Park at the South Fairmont Exit of I-79. The building is expected to be completed by 2011. The headquarters will house 150 jobs for a combination of transferred and new workers.

Schools using West Virginia-produced biodiesel

AC&S, Inc., in Nitro, West Virginia's first biodiesel manufacturer, is supplying the renewable fuel to several county school systems through their petroleum distributors. AC&S, which began operations in 1986, is a chemical manufacturer, commercial analytical laboratory and railcar cleaning facility that employs about 50 people in its operations. The biodiesel production unit can produce 3 million gallons a year. AC&S biodiesel is sold to petroleum distributors. Currently, 25 counties use biodiesel-blended fuel in 1,795 of their buses.

West Virginia agencies exhibit at International Woodworking Fair 2008

Several West Virginia groups participated in the International Woodworking Fair 2008, one of the world's largest trade shows for the furniture manufacturing, architectural woodwork and general woodworking industries. Teaming up to promote current wood industries in West Virginia were the West Virginia Development Office, West Virginia Division of Forestry and members of local development organizations, including the Hardwood Alliance Zone, Hardy, Mingo, Roane and Jackson counties. The Woodworking Fair attracts attendees from more than 80 countries.

Study shows West Virginia's economy is making progress

A new competitive analysis indicates that West Virginia is making advances in areas important to economic success. The report by Market Street Services shows that the state is progressing in areas such as adding quality jobs to the economy; providing accessible public education; tax and workers' compensation reforms; priming K-12 students for success; low cost of living; commitment to the arts; and supporting entrepreneurs. The analysis also noted priority areas to improve, including community health and retaining young talent. The report was commissioned by Vision Shared, a statewide community and economic development nonprofit organization.

September is National Preparedness Month

Part of an effective business plan includes planning for emergencies, according to the U. S. Department of Homeland Security. The Web site <http://www.ready.gov> and brochure *Ready Business* outlines measures business owners and managers can take to prepare for disruptions. Visitors to the Web site can click on the National Preparedness Month Coalition Member icon on the bottom left of the screen and register to join. Members can volunteer for activities such as reviewing the organization's emergency preparedness plans with employees or host a blood drive.