



The November 2007 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.

Mineral County firm wins \$37 million Navy contract

Alliant Techsystems has been awarded a \$37 million contract by the U.S. Navy for the continued restoration and modernization of the Allegany Ballistics Laboratory (ABL) in Rocket Center, W.Va. The funds will be used to build a new facility, consolidate engineering personnel and restore a production facility for advanced manufacturing technologies. Companies at ABL employ more than 1,400 people. The restoration program has moved ABL from a World War II-era facility to a modern, world-class operation that supports diverse defense missions.

Dominion adds 50 jobs in Lewis County

Dominion Exploration and Production announced it is bringing 50 jobs to its office in Jane Lew, W.Va., this year. Some of the jobs in finance, accounting, land management and computer technology will be hired locally and some filled by transfers from other company locations. The additions will expand staffing at Dominion's Jane Lew office from 65 to 115.

Aerospace firms choose Bridgeport for potential component production center

Two aerospace manufacturers have selected Bridgeport as the site for a proposed new aerospace refueling center of excellence. EADS North America and Cobham PLC announced plans to build adjoining plants to produce key components for Northrop Grumman Corp.'s KC-30 aerial tanker. The two plants, expected to cost \$8.5 million and employ 100 or more people, are contingent on the KC-30 being selected by the Air Force as its next-generation tanker.

The Bridgeport facility would produce the KC-30's refueling boom and its under-wing hose and drogue refueling system. It would also include a 25,000-square-foot plant where British-based Cobham and its U.S. subsidiary Sargent Fletcher Inc. would produce hose and drogue pods.

SBDC and INNOVA partner to bring more research funding to West Virginia companies

A new collaborative effort will provide more support to West Virginia firms participating in the Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. The highly competitive federal SBIR program provides funding for small

firms to perform research and development that meets the nation's scientific and engineering needs. The state Small Business Development Center and INNOVA Commercialization Group created the new Phase GO program to increase awareness of SBIR opportunities and boost the amount of financial assistance available to West Virginia businesses.

Governor builds relationships with Japanese and Canadian business leaders

Gov. Joe Manchin recently reaffirmed the state's business ties with Japan and with Canada. While in New York for the World Business Forum, Manchin met with Japan's Ambassador Motoatsu Sakurai, who had arranged a luncheon meeting with top executives from Japanese corporations located in New York and New Jersey.

A few days later, the governor toured Canada, one of West Virginia's top trading partners. Manchin met with government officials including the Quebec Premier Jean Charest, government and industry energy leaders and executives from Toyota, Bombardier and Alcan. The governor toured Toyota's plant in Cambridge, Ontario, which uses engines built in Toyota's Buffalo, W. Va., plant. The Toyota Motor Manufacturing West Virginia plant employs 1,200 people. Bombardier employs about 350 people at its aircraft maintenance and repair facility at the North Central West Virginia Airport in Bridgeport. Alcan operates an aluminum plant in Ravenswood with about 1,200 workers.

West Virginia plastics manufacturers represented at German trade show

West Virginia's Polymer Alliance Zone (PAZ) exhibited at the K-Plastics show in Dusseldorf, Germany. PAZ marketing efforts received support from the West Virginia Development Office and its European Office in Munich. Scheduled once every three years, K-Plastics is one of the largest plastics show in the world. More than 3,100 companies from 59 countries participated in the Oct. 24-31 show. The 2007 theme was "Turning Vision into Business."

September records state's lowest-ever unemployment rate

The state's unemployment rate continues dropping to record lows. WORKFORCE West Virginia reported the state's unemployment average rate for September was 4 percent, down seven-tenths of a percent from August, and the lowest rate the state has recorded. Each month this year has posted the lowest rate for that month, putting 2007 on track for a record-low year.

WVEDA approves issuing revenue bonds

During its October meeting, the West Virginia Economic Development Authority approved issuing revenue bonds and lending the proceeds to Appalachian Power Company (AEP) for the following:

- Sale of property in Lakin, Mason County. AEP, through its Appalachian Power subsidiary, is purchasing nearly 27-acres adjacent to its existing 10-acre site from the West Virginia Economic Development Authority for approximately \$268,000. AEP will expand its river operations center.
- Finance certain costs of the environmental facilities at AEP's John E. Amos plant in Winfield, Putnam County. AEP is installing flue gas desulfurization (FGD) systems on all three generating units at the plant. The FGD systems, commonly known as scrubbers, will reduce sulfur dioxide emissions at the plant by as much as 98 percent.