

**Governor Joe Manchin's
Open for Business Report
May 3, 2006 Edition**



The May 2006 report reflects progress in the state's economic development efforts during the past month, with projects and related announcements that will assist with the creation of as many as 257 new jobs and the preservation of a significant number of existing jobs.

- **Verizon announced expansions in Clarksburg, Charleston and Martinsburg.** The company announced 32 new jobs and a \$1 million renovation at its Holden St. facility in Clarksburg. The increase brings its work force to more than 120 people, and with the upgrade they have the capacity for more. This office does sales and service for residential consumers across the Mid-Atlantic region. Verizon added 71 jobs at three call centers in the company's state headquarters location in Charleston. These employees provide sales and service to residential and business customers, also within the Mid-Atlantic region. Verizon added 15 top technician jobs in Martinsburg at a center that does specialized custom electronic outfitting of remote terminal enclosures, or huts, for the company's network facilities across the East Coast.
- **Gov. Manchin led a mission to Europe to meet prospective investors and strengthen current relationships with European companies.** Representatives from the Governor's Office, the West Virginia Development Office, the West Virginia European Office and the West Virginia Division of Tourism accompanied Gov. Manchin to meet privately with prospective investors in Germany and Italy. The group visited representatives from current West Virginia investors as well as other potential new European investors. After promoting West Virginia Tourism in Germany, First Lady Gayle Manchin and Division of Tourism representatives marketed the state's tourism opportunities in London, England.
- **West Virginia Development Office representatives participated in the Biotechnology Industry Organization's BIO 2006 Annual Convention in Chicago, an international conference and trade show for biotech professionals.** BIO's annual event focuses on all aspects of the biotechnology industry including biodefense, drug development, biometrics, alternative energy and nanotechnology. Representatives from Marshall University, the Huntington Area Development Council, Vandalia Research, Inc., Alcon Manufacturing and West Virginia University's research park also attended.

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- **GNH Trucking announced the location of a 12,000-square-foot trucking company on 12.1 acres in the Northpointe Business & Industry Park.** The project will create 75 jobs. GNH Trucking, a family-owned company headquartered in Farmington, Pennsylvania, has been transporting commodities with Interstate Commerce Commission authorities in 48 states for more than 30 years. The company will invest \$2 million in the project, which will provide trucking services for Gabriel Brothers, Kingsford Charcoal, Lignetics, Clorox, Chemtura Corporation, Dick's Sporting Goods and other local companies in the tri-state area. GNH Trucking's Preston County location also will have a repair component, which will service business and industry park tenants. Visit GNH Trucking at www.gnhtrucking.com.
- **West Virginia Development Office representatives attended the SAE 2006 World Congress in Detroit to promote the state's automotive industry.** Vehicle manufacturers, suppliers, government and academia from around the world gathered to exchange ideas on the state of advanced automotive technology and business in today's global marketplace. A Charleston Area Alliance representative also attended with the WVDO group.
- **Meiji Corporation announced the location of a 2,000-square-foot sales office and warehouse in the Appalachian Rail Car Building in the Eleanor Industrial Park.** Based in Nagoya, Japan, the company distributes factory automation components, specializing in equipment for the automotive industry but also serving the chemical, plastics, steel, printing and food processing industries. Meiji Corporation's U.S. headquarters is in Elk Grove Village, Illinois. The company's West Virginia office will serve as a branch of their Lexington, Kentucky, location. Visit Meiji Corporation at www.meijicorp.com.
- **A West Virginia Development Office delegation promoted the state as a location for the business services industry at the HRO 2006 (Human Resource Outsourcing) conference in New York City.** The group also included representatives from the Business Development Corporation of the Northern Panhandle, the Huntington Area Development Council, the I-79 Development Council and the Regional Economic Development Partnership. The state's business services industry has created 3,085 jobs over the past three years, making it one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy. The industry consists of business services centers, hospital and medical insurance service carriers and insurance service centers. This includes business entities engaged in providing administrative and customer support services, hospital and medical insurance plan companies and entities providing services to the insurance industry.

- **The West Virginia Economic Development Authority granted preliminary approval for a \$222,260 loan to Inter-State Hardwoods Company, Inc., for acquisition and installation of a new molder line at its existing facility in the East Fork Industrial Park at Bartow, Pocahontas County.** Inter-State Hardwoods manufactures wood products serving coal mining, furniture, log buildings and wood products manufacturers and retailers. Installation of the new molder line will permit the company to produce a wider range of value-added wood products. Inter-State Hardwoods will create six new jobs over the next year.
- **West Virginia Development Office representatives and representatives from Fayette County attended the American Planning Association meeting in San Antonio, Texas, to make a presentation regarding development of Wolf Creek Business Park in Fayette County.** The 1000-acre, mixed-use park includes business, commercial and residential development.
- **The West Virginia Economic Development Authority granted preliminary approval for a \$690,900 loan to K Group, LLC, for acquisition and renovation of a 58,000-square-foot building located in White Sulphur Springs, Greenbrier County.** The K Group, LLC, is a real estate holding company and will lease the facility to HCR Imaging, Inc. HCR has been in operation for approximately three years and converts medical record files to a searchable digital image. K Group will create 58 new jobs over the next three years.
- **West Virginia's unemployment rate of 4.5 percent in March is the lowest March unemployment rate on record and the third month in a row to post a new low, according to WORKFORCE West Virginia.** March 2005 total nonfarm payroll employment has risen 9,600, with gains of 6,400 in the service-providing sector and 3,200 in the goods-producing sector.
- **According to the Energy Information Administration, West Virginia had the third-lowest industrial electricity rates in the nation during 2005.** The state's industrial rates were only 69 percent of the national average, 3.86 cents per kilowatt-hour for West Virginia compared to the national average of 5.56 cents.