



Pike County Economic Development Corporation

Pike County
Economic Development Corporation
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Important Reminder!

Set up your Email Spam Filter to accept:

gsheurman@pikeedc.org

This will ensure timely delivery of any email correspondence you may receive from PCEDC.

2014-2015
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Development Matters

Volume 3, Issue 4—May 2014

Welcome to the May 2014 edition of *Development Matters*, a monthly newsletter of the Pike County Economic Development Corporation. As a valued member and supporter of PCEDC, you will receive this monthly newsletter to help keep you informed of our activities and possible opportunities for businesses and area organizations. We hope that you will find the information useful and beneficial.

PCEDC is dedicated to our mission to support and expand business and employment by improving the quality of life, utilizing our human and natural resources, and by promoting communication and partnerships throughout Pike County.

Executive Director's Corner



Gina Sheurman,
Executive Director

It seems as if I blinked and it is already closing in on the end of May! We have had a very busy month with events and activities throughout the County. We started May with our Quarterly Business Education Roundtable, where we had an excellent presentation by Lori Helkey on the Reach and Rise Mentoring Program that is through the Twin Pikes YMCA.. We hope that this initiative will fit into the future plans for Pike County, Illinois, as it has been identified through our previous roundtables that Mentoring is an area that we could utilize with our schools and local youth. It is amazing, looking back two years ago, to see how far we have come with our Roundtables and the great strides we have made in working together as a community. We are currently preparing to hand out our first round of Workforce Readiness Program Certificates, just another great example of the work that was initiated through our Roundtables. Over 20 kids county-wide will be awarded this certificate!

The second week of May was a whirlwind of activities with the Tri-State Development Summit taking place in Hannibal on May 7th . The Tri-State Development Summit focused on Waterways , Transportation and Regionalism. There were great speakers throughout the day and an opportunity to network with other professionals, business and community leaders from throughout the 35 counties that make up the Tri-State Region. It is always encouraging to see the trials and successes of our neighbors to help us continue moving forward right here in Pike County.

On May 8th, PCEDC hosted an inaugural Rural Economic Development Roundtable, featuring presentations by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, USDA Rural Development and Illinois Department of Transportation. You can read more on this event on the following pages, but I want to thank the various individuals who attended for taking time out of their schedules to spend an afternoon with us, discussing issues and potential programs and services available. A huge thank you to DCEO, USDA, and IDOT for their participation as well. As I explained to everyone in attendance that day—working together, we can achieve great things!

Just a reminder that we do not have a meeting scheduled for the month of May, but I hope to see everyone at our Quarterly Membership Meeting in June! This will be our quarterly meeting, and we invite you to bring a friend!

Pike County Economic Development Corporation hosts Rural Economic Development Roundtable Featuring USDA, DCEO and IDOT

Approximately 40 Community and Business Leaders from the Pike County area attended a Rural Economic Development Roundtable on Thursday, May 8th, 2014, from 1pm to 4pm at the Farm Bureau Auditorium in Pittsfield. The Roundtable, planned and hosted by Pike County Economic Development Corporation, was designed as an open forum for discussion of issues affecting this region, as well as a forum for explaining resources and programs available from various agencies. This event was open to PCEDC members and key business and community leaders in Pike County and the surrounding area. The platform of speakers included USDA Rural Development State Director Colleen Callahan, USDA Rural Development Area Director Dwight Reynolds, Illinois Department of Transportation Director of Planning and Programming Charles Ingersoll, and Senior Account Manager for the Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity Sal Garza.



Colleen Callahan, State Director for USDA Rural Development discusses programs and services available to municipalities and businesses.

“This forum provided our members and key stakeholders within the community an opportunity to hear about the pertinent programs that are available to businesses and communities, but also a platform to discuss issues that are affecting our businesses here in Pike County,” said PCEDC Executive Director Gina Sheurman. “I was very pleased that our organization was able to provide this type of event to our community, as it sets forth a progressive movement to address ongoing issues that our employers are facing.”

The Roundtable included business owners, municipal and government leaders, non-profit organizations, community leaders, educators and others interested in the future of economic development in Pike County. The format for the day was 30 minute presentations by each agency, followed by a 15 minute question and answer period, and the day wrapped up with an open discussion on economic development here in Pike County and an overview of the ongoing work that PCEDC is doing to address Small Business and Entrepreneurship, Workforce Readiness and Business Attraction and Retention within the County.

“Based on the feedback we have received from those in attendance, this was a very worthwhile event, and it is my hope that this is the start of a series of these type of events that will allow our businesses and community leaders to engage in a dialogue that will better equip our area in addressing key topics such as workforce development, business



retention and expansion, as well as formulating a strategic plan for our organization and county as a whole,” said Sheurman.

As a follow-up to the afternoon meeting, PCEDC also hosted a Quarterly Elected Official’s Meeting on Thursday night with approximately 20 in attendance where all three agencies spoke directly to the Elected Officials on programs that are available on the municipal level. PCEDC hosts these quarterly meetings as a platform for networking and education for elected officials.

“The Quarterly Elected Officials’ meetings have been a great success due to the participation by our municipalities. They come together to network and assist each other with problems that each are facing but also to provide support and guidance on topics such as ordinances, code enforcement, and community activities to name just a few,” according to Sheurman. “To be able to provide speakers from USDA, DCEO and IDOT was a tremendous asset to the conversation and it is a great segue into future meeting topics.”

The Pike County Economic Development Corporation is a public/private economic development organization in Pike County, Illinois. PCEDC’s mission is to support and expand business and employment by improving the quality of life, utilizing our human and natural resources, and by promoting communication and partnerships throughout Pike County. The organization provides economic development support in the following areas: Business Retention & Expansion, Business Attraction, Small Business Development and Community Development Planning. For more information on the programs and services that are available through the Pike County Economic Development Corporation or to become a member of the organization, you are encouraged to contact Sheurman at 217-440-5101 or by email at gsheurman@pikeed.org.



Sal Garza, Senior Account Manager for the West Central Region of the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity addresses attendees of the PCEDC Rural Economic Development Roundtable.



**This Crucial Market Research Can Help Your Company Shine
BY Perry Evans (taken from Entrepreneur.com)**

Running a small business, among other things, takes focus. For many, this involves focusing on their product and their customers. But their focus shouldn't end there. They should focus on their surroundings -- the market in which they operate.

No business, big or small, operates in a vacuum. Pay all the attention in the world to what's going on inside your company. But knowing how this compares to the trends of your competitors, neighbors and industry peers is the difference between surviving and thriving.

It's all about the data. Watch the data long enough, and patterns start to emerge. Understanding those patterns that can help you stand apart from the crowd. Staying engaged and active with this type of market research is difficult, and frankly most businesses simply don't because they're too busy focusing on daily realities. And there's just too much data from too many sources it's a challenge to separate which is valuable and what's noise. Focusing on the right data makes all the difference.

Here are a few tips that may work for you:

1. Cast a wide net. Review your company's online presence for what your organization is saying and what consumers are saying. Look at Yelp and Google+ reviews. Are they positive? Can you encourage more reviews from happy customers? Next, look at your presence across all social platforms. Is your company posting regularly, asking questions and putting out content that customers are interacting with? Set goals to try to raise the frequency of reviews and number of Foursquare or Facebook check-ins and photo shares to boost the digital dialogue about experiences at your establishment.

2. Embrace and reward the positive. One emerging platform to monitor is Instagram. Most consumers share moments of joy and discovery through images, and many business owners today are not aware of the volume of images tagged to their business and don't know the conversations taking place based on these Instagram images.

Most consumers share moments of joy and discovery through images. These are moments that are easy to acknowledge and reward and share through the company's social profiles. For example, someone takes a photo of their dinner, tags the restaurant and begins collecting feedback and likes from friends. This shared experience is one that can be easily rewarded by the establishment with a discount offer, free coffee or maybe simply showcasing the picture on the company Facebook or Instagram profiles.

3. Keep your friends close but your enemies closer. Once you're getting reviews, check-ins, and likes, compare them to your main competitors'. Are they receiving the same volume, less or more? Read reviews of those companies on Yelp and Google+. Monitor what their customers say and how these companies engage in conversation with customers across social platforms. Find out the deals they're offering. This way you can quickly learn where your company stands in the context of the industry you're competing in, leading to both proactive and reactive strategies on your part.

4. Watch your neighbors. Learn from the companies close by as well. Your neighbors -- the companies next door, across the street or down the block -- share a contextual relationship by virtue of location. How are they drawing customers to your area? What deals or offers do they make that you can benefit from or piggyback on to take advantage of a potential shared customer? And what can you do to bring in new customers who may be equally interested in your neighbor's deals and offers?

5. Take the national pulse. Compete locally, but research nationally. There are likely many other companies doing what your does in markets far enough away that they're not a competitive threat. There's only upside in monitoring what kind of offers and social following they receive as a way to learn new tactics applicable to your situation. With a little customization and localization, an idea on the West Coast can play just as well on the East Coast. Proven ideas are in short supply, so take them where you can find them.

You'll execute these strategies differently, depending on your company's age. A newcomer business will be in attack mode, trying to grab market share away from competitors. An established business does the opposite, defending its turf from upstarts trying to move in. Knowing how your business communicates with consumers relative to competitors and neighbors can go a long way in deciding what move to make next.



PCEDC & Pike County Event Calendar

May Events:

Griggsville-Perry High School Graduation
Friday, May 23rd, 2014
Griggsville, IL

Western High School Graduation
Saturday, May 24th, 2014
Barry, IL

PCEDC Office Closed in Observance of Memorial Day
Monday, May 26th, 2014

Pike County Board Meeting
Tuesday, May 27th, 2014
7:00pm

Pike County Courthouse—Upper Courtroom
Pittsfield, IL

Pleasant Hill High School Graduation
Friday, May 30th, 2014
Pleasant Hill, IL

Pittsfield High School Graduation
Friday, May 30th, 2014
Pittsfield, IL

June Events:

PCEDC on WBBA Spotlight Show
Monday, June 2nd, 2014
9am
97.5FM-WBBA Radio

New Philadelphia Association Kiosk Dedication
Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014
4:30pm
New Philadelphia Site near Barry, IL

June Events (continued):

Illini Fitness 2nd Annual Glow Run
Friday, June 13th, 2014
8:00pm registration
9:00pm race time
Pittsfield, IL

For more information, call 217-285-5635

PCEDC Business Planning Workshop
Tuesday, June 17th, 2014
5pm—7pm
Farm Bureau Conference Room

Pike County Endowment Fund FunD Run
Saturday, June 21st, 2014
Pittsfield, IL

For more information, call 217-285-5971 or email
info@pikeil.org

PCEDC Quarterly Membership Meeting
Monday, June 23rd, 2014
5:30pm
Farm Bureau Auditorium

Pike County Board Meeting
Monday, June 23rd, 2014
7:00pm

Pike County Courthouse—Upper Courtroom
Pittsfield, IL

Western IL Fair
Wednesday, June 25th—Sunday, June 29th
Griggsville, IL



Not a member of PCEDC...join us today!

It is because of the generosity of business and community partners that we are able to fulfill our mission to enhance the economic future and quality of life in Pike County by expanding employment opportunities through promoting the expansion and retention of business and industry, coordinating local and state resources to existing businesses, and by uniting Pike County community by coordinating economic development activities and cultivating partnerships. We are fortunate to have many great partnerships in the area that have helped us to promote economic development. If you are not part of our growing network, we invite you to become a member of PCEDC by simply filling out the information below and mail the form and payment to : **Pike County Economic Development Corporation, PO Box 214, Pittsfield, IL 62363**. We thank you for your continued support to the growth and development of Pike County!

Individual / Company Name: _____

Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Website (if applicable): _____

Please add me to the mailing list for future correspondence

Membership Level:

Associate (\$1—\$99) Contributor (\$100-\$499) Voting (\$500 +)

Local Government (Based on Per capita-Please contact office for more information)

More information on membership benefits is available by visiting www.pikeedc.org

A Few Reminders!!

Don't forget to tune in to 97.5FM WBBA Radio on the first Monday of every month at 9am to hear PCEDC on the Spotlight Show!

Upcoming Events—Please Save the Date!

Business Planning Workshop—June 17th from 5pm to 7pm @ the Farm Bureau Conference Room

Find us on Facebook and Follow us on Twitter!