



WYTHE Economic Development News

**JOINT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
OF WYTHE COUNTY, WYTHEVILLE, AND RURAL RETREAT**

190 South First Street :: Wytheville, VA 24382

Phone (276) 223-3370

E-mail JointIDA@wytheville.org

Winter 2012



Note from the Executive Director

One can't help but to draw a comparison between the continuing thawing and improving local economy after some tough years and this mild winter following two relatively harsh winters. Green shoots are sprouting up in many places with local companies expanding facilities and experiencing improving growth.

High-level attention focused on the workforce development partnerships with Wytheville Community College and the significant impact of the Wythe-Bland Foundation are another couple of green shoots highlighted in this issue. We also welcome Carolyn Dankowski, Blue Ridge Gatorade plant manger, as a new Joint IDA board member.

A Ian Hawthorne

Dr. Jill Biden and Sec. Hilda Solis Visit WCC

Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden and a professor at Northern Virginia Community College, and Dept. of Labor Secretary Hilda Solis visited Wytheville Community College as part of the "Community College to Career" (CC2C) three-day bus tour that covered five states. The tour highlighted the important role community colleges play in developing a flexible, highly-trained 21st century workforce.

The focus of the WCC stop was the partnership between PepsiCo's Blue Ridge Gatorade facility and the local community college. Plant Manager Carolyn Dankowski (a new Joint IDA board member), along with several members of the Blue Ridge team, shared insights on the WCC-provided training in support of facility operations. Every new hire has the opportunity to enroll in a course or program at WCC. Many employees chose to complete courses and certifications in programs such as industrial maintenance, business facilitation, and total productive manufacturing. In the six years the plant has been open, more than 500 training programs have been completed by Gatorade's 330 employees.



Joint IDA Chair Linda DiYorio poses with Sec. Solis and Dr. Biden at the WCC event.

The tour highlighted the Community College to Career Fund recently announced by President Obama that will invest \$8 billion to forge new partnerships between community colleges and businesses to train two million workers with skills that will lead directly to jobs.

In this issue . . .

Note from the Executive Director	1
Dr. Biden and Sec. Solis Visit WCC	1
Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament	1
New Joint IDA Board Member	2
Wythe-Bland Foundation Impact	2
Industry Tenure Awards Presented	2
Regional Unemployment Rates	2

www.WytheIDA.org

Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament

May 17 at Wytheville Golf Club

With visions of spring beginning to appear on the distant horizon for many of us, the Joint IDA's Tournament Committee is preparing for another enjoyable golf tournament in 2012. The event will be held on the afternoon of May 17 at the Wytheville Golf Club. The outing provides a relaxing day of golf and fellowship in recognition of the important role of industry in our community. Sponsorships are available through the Joint IDA. Local business and industry leaders are urged to participate. Additional details and registration forms will be available soon. For further information, please contact the Joint IDA office at 276-223-3370.

New Board Member

Carolyn Dankowski is the Town of Wytheville's new appointee to the Joint IDA board of directors. Ms. Dankowski, who is the plant manager for the Blue Ridge Gatorade facility, replaces Dr. William Snyder, who served as a board member for eight years and as chairman of the Joint IDA board for the past three years. Dr. Snyder had previously served on the Joint IDA board in the 1990s.

Ms. Dankowski has filled various roles with PepsiCo's Gatorade and Tropicana operations before becoming plant manager at the Blue Ridge facility. She is a graduate of Ohio State University.



*New board member
Carolyn Dankowski*

Welcome to the board, Carolyn. We look forward to working with you to improve opportunities for our citizens.

Wythe-Bland Foundation Community Impact

When I share some of the things that make Wythe County "special" with prospects considering locating facilities here, the Wythe-Bland Foundation story invariably gets their attention. During the past four years over \$1.4 M have been invested in scholarships to pay tuition and fees to Wytheville Community College for any graduate of a Wythe or Bland county high school who has at least a two-year residency in the community. The highest demand for workers during the next decade is projected to be for those with a post-secondary, but less than a four-year, education. The foundation is making a big impact on the community by meeting this critical need.

Including funding for the WCC Scholarship Program, the Wythe-Bland Foundation has awarded over \$12 M in grants over the past four years for health, education, and welfare with an emphasis on health. That's a lot of impact for a population of 35,000.

Visit www.wbcfoundation.org to learn more about the Wythe-Bland Foundation.

VEDP's Dr. Jay Langston Keynotes Tenure Awards Luncheon

Dr. Jay Langston, Senior Research Manager with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, was the keynote speaker at the Joint IDA's Tenure Award Luncheon on February 23rd at the Wytheville Meeting Center. Dr. Langston, who heads VEDP's Project Support Group, shared his perspectives on economic development in rural Virginia. Representatives of the Board of Supervisors, the Towns of Wytheville and Rural Retreat, along with Wythe Manufacturing Council members joined the Joint IDA board for the event.



Tenure Award Recipients recognized at luncheon

The following companies were recognized for their contributions to employment and the community over extended periods of time: Lane Enterprises, Atsumi Car Equipment, J. Z. Utility Barns, Musser Lumber Company, Wordsprint, Wythe Stone, Coalfield Services, and Mt. Rogers Industrial and Developmental Center. You can view the full press release by visiting the Joint IDA website at www.wytheida.org/pressreleases.aspx.

The Joint IDA extends its appreciation to Wytheville Office Supply for its annual sponsorship of the Tenure Awards luncheon.



Regional Unemployment Rates

Location	Oct-10	Oct-11	Nov-10	Nov-11	Dec-10	Dec-11
Wythe	9.1%	6.8%	9.1%	7.0%	9.2%	7.0%
Bland	6.3%	5.2%	6.3%	5.3%	6.5%	5.4%
Smyth	10.5%	8.8%	11.0%	8.7%	11.1%	9.0%
Carroll	10.8%	8.3%	10.9%	8.2%	10.1%	8.3%
Grayson	10.5%	8.1%	11.5%	8.2%	12.5%	9.2%
Pulaski	7.5%	6.1%	7.8%	5.6%	7.6%	6.1%
Galax	10.8%	9.5%	10.8%	8.6%	10.8%	10.0%
Region*	9.4%	7.5%	9.7%	7.3%	9.6%	7.7%
Virginia	6.5%	6.0%	6.6%	5.7%	6.4%	6.1%
US	9.0%	8.5%	9.3%	8.2%	9.1%	8.3%

* Overall rate for the region including the Counties of Wythe, Bland, Smyth, Carroll, Grayson, and Pulaski, and the City of Galax.

Presentations Available

If your civic or other community group would like to have a presentation on Progress Park or on Wythe County economic development in general, please contact the Joint IDA office to schedule a presentation for your organization.

Wythe Economic Development News is published quarterly by the Joint Industrial Development Authority of Wythe County to inform interested parties of industrial development activities in the county and its incorporated towns. If you are not on the distribution list and would like to be added, please let us know at JointIDA@wytheville.org or call (276) 223-3370.