

Making a Difference in Jo Daviess and Carroll Counties



By Barbara Sue Grass, Program Coordinator for NWILED

Meet Northwest Illinois Economic Development (NWILED), an organization that can help make a difference in your business's development.

As a non-profit organization that was formed in 2008 by the Jo-Carroll Energy Board of Directors, NWILED's main goals are to spearhead economic development structures, funding and programs in Northwest Illinois. The board's main focus specifically was to form a regional development organization that concentrated on growing the economy and public/private partnerships to achieve these goals.

At its most basic level, NWILED is an entity that works to enhance the prosperity of the communities it serves, specifically those in Jo Daviess and Carroll counties. And while this work may be different for each community, NWILED is a regional organization committed to improving the quality of life for their members and communities through economic development leadership, which includes attracting new companies, helping existing companies grow or assisting entrepreneurs with their aspirations.

Some of the programs NWILED has developed and implemented, which are often outside of what many municipalities offer to enhance business development, include:

- Assisting entrepreneurs plan out the launch of their new business or advising a corporation looking to relocate in the county on site selection and incentives that are available to them on local, state and or federal levels.
- Acts as a conduit for new and existing businesses with a network of peer contacts, businesses, officials, local chambers, and regional planning organizations and other economic development organizations and bureaus.
- Conducts numerous professional lunch and learn workshops, an entrepreneurial boot camp and workforce development events such as Manufacturing and Trades Days. NWILED also manages the Genz Small Business Development Fund, maintains an online Jobs board, and offers the annual Build It Grow It entrepreneurial boot camp.

- NWILED also takes active roles in housing efforts, site readiness activities, tourism marketing and collaborations and alliances with other neighboring counties and regions.
- NWILED's website (www.nwiled.org) is an active resource center that includes more detailed information about the organization and user-friendly navigation to assist its members and outside venues in exploring opportunities.

Funding for NWILED is through public and private memberships that helps NWILED support, expand, enhance and continue the goals and objectives for the county's' growing communities. Memberships are open to all businesses and with the caveat of encouraging their expertise in helping to support, enhance and continue NWILED's goals and objectives for our growing communities.

NWILED's office is located at 1 Commercial Drive, Suite 2 in Hanover, Illinois, and their website is www.nwiled.org. The organization also has an active Facebook and LinkedIn pages.