



2021/2022

ANNUAL REPORT

NORTHWEST ILLINOIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

2022 has brought several changes to our organization. First and most importantly is the appointment of David Schmit as our new Regional Director. David has been with NWILED in a support role and has been able to hit the ground running with great enthusiasm. While David's title has changed slightly, so has our focus. In the past we have balanced our efforts between attracting new business to the area as well as serving the existing businesses. This has been often difficult with the competition from other areas and our limited staffing and funding. We will continue to seek new business for our two counties as we develop alliances with other economic development entities, but our primary goal is to focus on the existing businesses in our region. There are many that can use the various opportunities that we can provide such as educational programs, consultations, grants, and scholarships.

One of our financial instruments is the Genz Memorial Investment Fund. The Fund has allowed us to annually distribute funds to businesses based on their business needs. This year we are completing a grant to Meat Master Processing Company of Stockton, IL.

In reading this report, you will get an understanding of the activities that are taking place in Northwest Illinois and the range of support services and forward-looking activities that we are either creating or supporting. Our goal is to focus on existing businesses in Northwest Illinois by bringing our knowledge and programs to those businesses as well as working with other partners to attract new businesses to our region.

All of us at NWILED thank all of you for your continued support of our efforts to make Northwest Illinois a great place to live and conduct business.

William H. Jahnke, NWILED Board Chair, 2021-2022

NWILED GOALS

On August 12, 2020, the NWILED Board of Directors approved three goals to be completed by September 1, 2023. They are as follows:

1. Help with 24 business starts or expansions, project value below \$300,000
2. Help with 3 business expansions or relocations, project value above \$300,000
3. Launch 2 new programs to expand the economic ecosystem of our region

Goal 1 Status

COMPLETED as of September 2021

Adding to the work completed in 2021, NWILED staff conducted 13 business consultations since October 2021, which has resulted in 7 direct referrals to the Small Business Development Center at Sauk Valley Community College.

Goal 2 Status

NWILED staff conducted 13 business consultations since October 2021, which has resulted in 4 direct referrals to the Small Business Development Center at Sauk Valley Community College.

Goal 3 Status

NWILED launched the Genz Memorial Investment Fund in 2021 for businesses, including agriculture, in Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties. The program provides gap financing for for-profit businesses having trouble seeking financing with awards ranging between \$4,000 - \$8,000. The first payout went to getVRtours.com of Galena Territory in August 2021 followed by Lola's Deli of Elizabeth in January 2022. NWILED intends to make a third award to Meat Master Processing Company of Stockton late 2022 / early 2023.

WORKFORCE AND INDUSTRY

COVID Relief

COVID-19 affected many businesses across our region and NWILED stepped up with direct outreach for the Illinois Back to Business (B2B) Grant program. We served as an official Community Navigator Spoke through Blackhawk Hills Regional Council for the program spending dozens of hours counseling businesses, helping file applications, marketing the program, and fielding follow up inquiries. The result was more than \$690,000 being awarded to businesses in Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties.

Local Foods Study

NWILED worked with Blackhawk Hills Regional Council, Northern Illinois University, and others on the Northern Illinois Food Systems Network Study in an effort to help improve food and food processing conditions in Northwest Illinois. The study was released in July and can be downloaded from the NWILED website. Additionally, NWILED continues to support Jo Daviess Local Foods and their push to operate and grow a commercial kitchen at the Jo Daviess Carroll CTE Academy in Elizabeth, and Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau and their interest in expanding meat processing in Northwest Illinois.

Manufacturing Day

One of our most popular events from past years returned in April. Manufacturing Day 2022 brought over 300 high school students together from across Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties and into 16 area manufacturing and logistic facilities to expand their knowledge and perception of manufacturing careers. We collaborated with regional stakeholders to offer the event, including Business Employment Skills Team, Jo-Carroll Energy, and the Jo Daviess Carroll CTE Academy. Planning for Manufacturing Day 2023 began in September.

Made in NW Illinois

NWILED is pleased to present the Made in NW Illinois campaign spotlighting manufacturers and makers in Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties. So far this year, spotlights have been made on LabelMill in Savanna and River Bend Gallery in Galena, with Forster Products in Lanark and KD Welding in Hanover scheduled for release late 2022. At the close of 2022 a total of 10 spotlights will have been published on our area manufacturers and makers. Expect a new take on the series in 2023!

EMERGING INITIATIVES

HOUSING

The Jo Daviess County Housing Needs Assessment Study kicked off August 2021 with Redevelopment Resources and Blackhawk Hills Regional Council. Steering committee members include Ed Bochniak of the Jo/Carroll Housing Authority, Loras Herrig of City of East Dubuque, Steve McIntyre of the Jo Daviess County Board, and Sam VenHuizen from Citizens State Bank and the Stockton Chamber of Commerce. The study is expected to be released Fall 2022, and NWILED intends to present findings to local leaders.



PLANNING

NWILED is proud to embark on a strategic planning process for the revision of the Jo Daviess County Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted 11/13/2012. A steering committee has been formed to review the current plan and to advise on outside proposals for a formal update.



EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION - We grow together! In 2021 NWILED proudly launched our Diverse Businesses Initiative to help build a more inclusive, varied business community that welcomes people of all backgrounds. This work has involved organizing tailored events, targeted small business outreach, and a push to offer key organization and marketing materials in multiple languages. One specific component of this initiative was the publishing of a drone marketing video of the Savanna Industrial Park that is live on the NWILED website. This four-minute video highlights land ready for industrial development, the proposed port, and details site facts presented in English, Spanish, and Chinese.



ADDITIONAL PROJECT LIST

- Helped steer the Rockford - Dubuque Passenger Rail Feasibility Study
- Helped guide Galena Country Tourism's Tourism Master Plan for Jo Daviess County
- Hosted the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity on their listening tour of the Upper Mississippi River International Port District and the Corn Belt Ports
- Grew the NWILED's Build It Grow It Entrepreneurial Scholarship to include multiple awards of higher values
- Advocated for infrastructure upgrades in eastern Jo Daviess County along the Highway 20 corridor
- Organized a Bring Your Kid to Work event in coordination with six area chambers
- Helped revive the Jo Daviess County Adopt-A-Highway program as a pilot
- Drove the Savanna Chamber of Commerce's application for the City of Savanna Hotel/Motel Marketing Grant application
- Reviewed 26 Intersect Illinois project requests for both Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties
- Revived the NWILED online site map, which details industrial sites and commercial storefronts that are for sale in Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties
- Issued letters of support for three strategic initiatives:
 - Economic Growth Corporation's grant application to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to secure funds for a daycare facility at its Shimer Square redevelopment in Mount Carroll
 - East Central Intergovernmental Association's application for IDOT State Planning and Research (SPR) funding regarding the reestablishment of passenger rail service between Rockford, IL, and Dubuque, IA
 - Upper Mississippi River International Port District's long-term plans for access to the Navigable Waters of the Mississippi River and the connection of that access to expand rail arteries and storage facilities at the Savanna Industrial Park

OUTREACH EFFORTS

- Presented at the Highland Community College 2022 Leadership Forum
- Hosted a Small Business Lunch & Learn event with five other presenters in Savanna, specifically the Small Business Development Center at Sauk Valley Community College, Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity, Savanna Chamber of Commerce, Blackhawk Hills Regional Council, and Business Employment Skills Team
- Sponsored four local events, specifically May Fest in Mount Carroll, Shadfly Festival in Savanna, Fall into Stockton in Stockton, and the Galena Pride Picnic in Galena
- Attended numerous events, including ribbon cuttings, mixers, and local chamber meetings
- Marketed numerous small business and quality of life opportunities via targeted mailings, community meetings, press releases, and social media posts
- Advanced NWILED's relationships with multiple chambers of commerce and partner agencies, specifically Elizabeth Area Chamber, Galena Area Chamber, Galena Downtown Business Association, Lanark Chamber, Stockton Chamber, Savanna Chamber, Business Employment Skills Team, Blackhawk Hills Regional Council, Economic Growth Corporation, Galena Country Tourism, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity - Team RED, Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center, Jo Daviess Carroll Technical Education Academy, Northern Illinois University, and the Small Business Development Center at Sauk Valley Community College.
- NWILED Staff Appointments
 - Jo Daviess-Carroll Counties Joint Action Solid Waste Agency, Board
 - Quad Cities Regional Economic Development Authority, Board
 - Savanna Chamber of Commerce, Board
 - United Way of Northwest Illinois Emergency Food and Shelter, Board
 - Jo Daviess County Ad-Hoc Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, Appointee

NWILED INVESTOR MEMBERS

Diamond (\$20,000 +)



Jo-Carroll Energy

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

JO DAVIESS COUNTY
Illinois



ILLINOIS
BANK & TRUST

Silver (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

Conlon Construction Company

Bronze (\$1,000 - \$4,999)

Baranski Hammer Moretta & Sheehy
Carroll County Housing Authority
Citizens State Bank
City of Galena
City of Savanna
Commonwealth Edison
Dupaco Community Credit Union
Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa
First Community Bank of Galena

Highland Community College
Jo Daviess County Housing Authority
Local Redevelopment Authority
Logistics Park Dubuque
Nicor Gas
Operating Engineers Local 150
Riverport Railroad
Village of Elizabeth
Village of Hanover

Ambassador (\$250 - \$999)

Elkay Manufacturing
Greater Galena Marketing, Inc.
Jail Hill Inn

LabelMill
LEMFCO, Inc
Timmerman's Supper Club

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair - William Jahnke, Director, Upper Mississippi River International Port District

Vice-Chair - Joseph Mattingley, Market President, Illinois Bank & Trust

Secretary - Patrick Winders, Senior IT Risk & Compliance Analyst, Workiva

Treasurer - Amiee Schoenhaar, CEO, COO, CFO, Riverport Railroad

Tiffany Brandt, Branch Manager - Galena, Dupaco Community Credit Union

Mike Casper, President and CEO, Jo-Carroll Energy

Rob Davies, Deputy Director, Savanna Industrial Park

Kathleen Gable, Village of Hanover Board

Diane Gallagher, Jo Daviess County Board

Christina Kuberski, President, Highland Community College

Ron Smith, Jo-Carroll Local Redevelopment Authority Board

Mark Szula, Organizer, International Union of Operating Engineers Local 150

OUTGOING DIRECTORS

Robin Pearson STEP Coordinator, Northwest Special Education Cooperative

MISSION STATEMENT



NWILLINOIS
Economic Development

Northwest Illinois Economic Development has come a long way since 2009, when the Jo-Carroll Energy Board of Directors studied economic development structures, funding and progress in Jo Daviess, Carroll, and Whiteside counties in Northwest Illinois. The Board decided to form a regional development entity concentrating on growing the economy and public/private partnerships – Tri County Economic Development Alliance.

In our efforts to continuously improve, we changed our organization's name to Northwest Illinois Economic Development (NWILED) to reflect our location more accurately in the country and around the world.

Today, NWILED promotes economic development by fostering business growth. We assist expanding and relocating businesses in determining their needs for growth with cooperation of our government and business partners. We encourage entrepreneurs by assisting with access to resources to begin and grow their businesses and employ all available resources to create a welcoming business environment, aligning the skills of our workforce with the needs of businesses, and building political and economic capital.

Contact Us

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