



NWILED UPDATE

START - EXPAND - RELOCATE



Workforce Housing Study

Funding secured for Jo Daviess County

Blackhawk Hills Regional Council, a NWILED partner, will begin a workforce housing needs assessment study of Jo Daviess County beginning summer 2021. Housing is a perennial concern of public officials, major employers, and residents. The study will focus on availability, affordability, and the age of both the area's population and structures. Anticipated benefits include the generation of data usable by developers and local officials and the identification of how Covid-19 has impacted housing stock which will fuel future grant-writing opportunities, facilitate workforce growth and stabilization, give support to workers, and allow the region to keep pace with Iowa and Wisconsin investment.

This spring Emily Legel, NWILED Executive Director, worked with Jo Daviess County officials and municipalities to secure the county's necessary contribution of \$12,000 with Blackhawk Hills contributing an additional \$10,000 to fully fund the \$22,000 project which will take approximately nine months to complete. NWILED assisted the county with a \$2,500 contribution and will help facilitate the study locally in addition to moderating a steering committee of county stakeholders. Efforts to bring the study to Carroll County were not successful.

Riverport Railroad, LLC

Accessing the world through NW IL

Riverport Railroad (RVPR) is a Class III short line railroad serving a commercial, industrial, and distribution complex with 73 miles of track at the former Savanna Army Depot north of Savanna. Straddling both Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties, RVPR can store up to 2,900 railcars, is recognized as a BNSF Primer Transloader, and owns and or controls 1,995 acres. RVPR has been a NWILED member since 2014.

Community-based corporate citizenship is strongly promoted at RVPR. In 2020 they purchased and distributed Savanna Chamber of Commerce Bucks to local restaurants for Covid-19 quarantine promotions. RVPR donates to the United Way of NW IL Dolly Parton Imagination Library, area food pantries, Toys for Tots, and for the past seven years has awarded multiple \$2,000 trade scholarships to graduating seniors at River Ridge and West Carroll High Schools.



GENZ UPDATE

Round one of the Genz Memorial Investment Fund awards will be announced this summer. NWILED will fund three awards per year that range from \$4,000 to \$8,000 and will accept future applications on a rolling basis. Awards can be used for capital purchases, to purchase an existing business, or for startup and pilot projects. English and Spanish-language applications are posted on the NWILED website under the Business Resources tab.

PASSENGER RAIL UPDATE

In June NWILED attended meeting #2 of the Rockford - Dubuque Passenger Rail Feasibility Study. Quandel Consultants updated steering committee members from across the region on the feedback generated at their May community focus group meetings, cooperation efforts with railroad companies, the status of station selection, and presented their initial field inspection reports from along proposed rail lines. July's update will focus on what service operations could look like.

SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

Kaitlin Kilgore, a graduating senior from River Ridge High, was announced as the winner of the 2021 Build It Grow It Entrepreneurial Scholarship on May 20th receiving a \$1,000 cash prize. Kilgore is developing a hand-crafted artisan doll line and intends to use her prize money to complete a prototype doll. She will attend the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design this fall. NWILED received a total of six applications this year. A judging panel selected this year's winner.

NWILED Annual Meeting

Eagle Ridge Resort this September

The 2021 NWILED Annual Meeting will be held at Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa's Eagle Ballroom on Wednesday, September 29th from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. Presented by Jo-Carroll Energy, Illinois Bank & Trust, and Jo Daviess County, the event will include a distinguished speaker, a panel of regional business leaders, and will feature businesses from the Made in Northwest Illinois series. Guests are invited to a cocktail hour followed by a dual entrée dinner. Find our event listing on Facebook.

NWILED Golf Outing

Woodbine Bend this October



The First Annual NWILED Golf Outing will be held at Woodbine Bend Golf Course & Restaurant on Saturday, October 16th with registration beginning at 11:30 AM and a shotgun start at Noon. Presented by Jo-Carroll Energy, Illinois Bank & Trust, and Jo Daviess County, the four-person scramble will feature nine holes of golf, a clubhouse patio grill out, and live entertainment from Ralph Kluseman. Sponsorship opportunities are available. Find our event listing on Facebook.

Made in Northwest Illinois

New manufacturing spotlight series launched

In May NWILED announced a campaign to spotlight manufacturing in Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties. Companies of all sizes were invited to tell their individual stories to show Northwest Illinois is a place where manufacturing is uniquely prospering. The Made in Northwest Illinois series began with Galena Cellars Vineyard & Winery followed by Big Miniature Farms, Metform, and The Scent Workshop. More spotlights will be released this summer in a runup to NWILED's Annual Meeting. You can find published spotlights on the NWILED website under the News tab.



Director Letter

Having an impact

Dear Friends -

As we emerge from the pandemic our businesses are busier than ever before. From the features of the Made in Northwest Illinois series to our downtown retailers to our transportation companies, summer 2021 is bringing a level of growth not seen in our region since I started this position two years ago this month. We are getting out to visit more businesses, we are bringing new potential development sites online, and we're even close to starting a new strategic planning process to better serve our communities moving forward. With these changes, we are also seeing new challenges, including a worsening worker shortage, and a lack of affordable housing for people entering the labor market.

Join us as we spotlight our newest round of projects, from the Housing Needs Assessment for Jo Daviess County to Manufacturing Day, to the first Genz Memorial Investment Fund awardees, and do not forget to mark your calendars for the upcoming annual meeting and golf outing for fall.

It has been a privilege to serve these past two years, and I cannot wait to see how we grow moving forward.

Emily Legel

Manufacturing Day

Carroll and Jo Daviess County this October

The annual tours of manufacturers for high school students is officially happening! To celebrate National Manufacturing Month, NWILED and our partners are offering tours of area manufacturers in the first week of October. Past partners include Metform, Elkay, Signcraft and Lemfco. Stay tuned to our social media to learn more.

Connect with NWILED

Consulting Services - Event RSVP

Schedule a free and confidential business consultation with Emily Legel, Executive Director: 815-297-7361 / elegel@nwiled.org .

RSVP to Annual Meeting or Golf Outing with David Schmit, Program Coordinator: 815-281-0206 / dschmit@nwiled.org .