



## NEW VINCENNES MAINTENANCE TRAINING FACILITY OPENS

Vincennes University has officially opened its new cutting-edge industrial maintenance training lab at the Jackson County Learning Center in partnership with the Jackson County Education Coalition, Jackson County Industrial Development Corporation, and Seymour-Jackson County. The program addresses the existing demand for highly-trained technicians and nurture a pipeline of talent ready to step into these positions and is supported by READI funding.

On November 9th, VU and local officials held a ribbon-cutting of its new 1,600-square-foot training lab at the Learning Center with VU President Dr. Chuck Johnson among the guest speakers. “In close collaboration with our valued industry partners, Vincennes University is committed to cultivating talent, arming individuals with the knowledge and hands-on experience necessary to excel in the industrial maintenance trade,” VU Vice President of Workforce Development and Community Services David Tucker said.

According to Jackson County Industrial Development Corporation Executive Director Jim Plump, “With the large concentration of industry in Seymour-Jackson County and the surrounding area, the need for maintenance training was constantly mentioned as a need during our conversations with companies. As we met to try and figure out how we could pull something like this together, the reputation of Vincennes University’s training programs made it an easy call to see if they could be our partner to offer this training. We are extremely excited about this partnership to help expand our workforce development efforts.”

VU will offer four courses at the site in basic electrical, basic mechanical, intermediate electrical, and intermediate mechanical in a state-of-the-art training lab filled with high-quality equipment including AC/DC Electrical Systems, Electric Motor Control with Troubleshooting, Electronic sensors, Mechanical Drives chains, belts and gears, Pneumatics, Hydraulics, Motors with Troubleshooting, bearings and lubricants, Laser Shaft Alignment and Vibration.

As part of the READI program, a local match is required, and Aisin, Valeo and Cummins joined the Seymour Redevelopment Commission in helping fund the training lab.

Launched by Gov. Holcomb and led by the IEDC, READI 1.0 which allocated \$487 million to 361 projects from the \$500 million READI fund, is part of the 2023 Next Level Agenda and approved by the Indiana General Assembly. READI 2.0 continues to build on the framework and successes of the Indiana Regional Cities Initiative and the 21st Century Talent Initiative, encouraging regional collaboration and data-driven, long-term planning that, when implemented, will attract and retain talent in Indiana.

## CUMMINS PLANS GROWTH

As 2023 was coming to a close, Cummins announced plans for a 3-year project that will see a total investment of over \$27.5 million, including more than \$4 million during the 4th quarter of the year.

Appearing before the Seymour City Council, representatives of Cummins said the company plans to invest \$4,037,820 in personal property, and \$400,000 in real property for this project by the end of the year.

Although the project does not anticipate any new job creation, it does help retain current workforce of 954 workers and payroll of over \$78-million dollars. Seymour City Council approved 10-year abatement for both real and personal property, and the company anticipates returning to Council with additional abatement requests of more than \$13.4 million in 2024 and \$9.6 million in 2025.

## JCIDC, SEYMOUR HAVE SUCCESSFUL TRIP TO JAPAN

Seymour Mayor Matt Nicholson and Jim Plump, executive director of JCIDC were among a 13-person delegation from South Central Indiana to visit Japan in November.

Other members of the delegation were from Columbus, Greensburg, North Vernon, Jeffersonville and New Albany, and the group made stops in Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka to visit with companies that have invested throughout South Central Indiana.

"It was a very good trip to meet those companies that have existing facilities in our region," said Nicholson, who was making his second trip to Japan after attempts to visit in 2020 and 2021 were not allowed due to the pandemic. "I'm hopeful that we'll see new investment in the coming months."

In addition to existing company visits, the group also hosted a "Friends of South Central Indiana Reception" in Nagoya, which attracted 50 Japanese business executives.

### ROSENBERG ADDRESSES ANNUAL JCIDC LUNCHEON; HILL, LANE HONORED

Indiana Secretary of Commerce David Rosenberg was the featured speaker at the annual JCIDC Reports Reviews and Rewards Luncheon held in early October.

Rosenberg, who was appointed to that post by Governor Eric Holcomb in August, spoke about the many recent successes of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC), and also how the READI grant program is making a difference in the South Central region, including in Jackson County.



**Trevor Lane**

In addition, JCIDC also honored Jackie Hill for her 25 years of service to the Workforce Partnership. Under the umbrella of JCIDC, the JCIDC Workforce Partnership was established in 1998 with a goal to bring industry, schools, local elected officials, and economic development leaders together to make the county's employers more competitive. Hill started with JCIDC in 1990 and took over leadership of the Workforce Partnership in 1998.

Trevor Lane of the IEDC was named recipient of a new award that was unveiled at the reception. To honor the work of former partners Dick Elmore and Delbert Kilgas, JCIDC executive director Jim Plump announced Lane would receive the first Elmore-Kilgas award for making a difference in the economic and industrial landscape in Jackson County.

"Six years ago, JCIDC recognized the efforts of Dick Elmore and Delbert Kilgas at this event," said Plump. "Those two started Excel Tool and later Excel Manufacturing ... and were true leaders in this community. Less than two years later, each had passed. One way to remember their legacy is to name this award after them."

In announcing Lane as the recipient, Plump stated "Our first winner, ironically, is not a resident of Jackson County but since 2005 has worked on numerous projects that have resulted in millions of dollars in investment and hundreds of jobs being created."

Lane is Director of Attraction for the South Region for the IEDC.

## JACKSON COUNTY CELEBRATES MFG DAY

MFG Day is a national initiative to inspire the next generation of creators and shift perceptions about modern manufacturing. On October 25th, 200 students from five high schools participated in the 4th annual Jackson County MFG Day. Darren Kimmel, SEP Plant Manager, and Mayor Matt Nicholson welcomed the students to SEP where they spent the morning participating in four workshops learning about career pathways, budgeting, communication, and hearing from young professionals employed in manufacturing. The students split into groups and traveled to participating employer locations for lunch, tours, and afternoon activities. "We truly had such a great experience and are thankful to have been a part of it," said Katie Whitehead, Crothersville High School Guidance Counselor. "The interactive team building activities in the afternoon were fantastic. Our students really enjoyed and benefitted from them." In addition to SEP, other participating companies were Aisin, Dicksons, Lannett, Pet Supplies Plus, and Silgan.



Manufacturing Day, October 2023

## WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP AWARDED AMERICAN WATER CHARITABLE FOUNDATION GRANT

JCIDC's Workforce Partnership was awarded a \$7500 American Water Charitable Foundation STEM Education grant. The STEM Education grant is part of the American Water Charitable Foundation's Keep Communities Flowing Grant Program aiming to support high-impact projects and initiatives that further American Water's commitment to ESG (environmental, social and governance), as well as inclusion, diversity, and equity.

"We are honored to receive this grant utilizing these funds to support robotics in our county high schools," said Jackie Hill, Partnership Director. "We have experienced a growing interest from students in our elementary and middle school VEX Robotics programs. This funding will allow us to extend the robotics opportunities for students in high school."

## INAUGURAL REALITY FAIR HELD AT SEYMOUR MIDDLE SCHOOL

Approximately 375 students participated in the inaugural Reality Fair at Seymour Middle School on October 13th. The 8th grade students were given the opportunity to take part in this exciting event and learn valuable lessons about managing finances in the real world. Volunteer Gary Meyer expressed the importance of the program saying, "It exposes them to income, expenses and what's left over. It's good exposure for them."

The JCIDC Workforce Partnership received funding through a Wal-Mart grant for start up costs. In partnership with Seymour Community Schools, over 50 community volunteers were recruited to manage the booths throughout the day. "The first year for the reality fair went very well," said Mandy Rohdert, Partnership Coordinator. "We are appreciative of the community volunteers who assisted with this project and other events we coordinate throughout the year." Plans are underway to make this an annual event and expand the opportunity to all 8th grade students in Jackson County.

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