



**Kevin Gabbard, President,
JCIDC Board of Directors**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

One year ago, I wrote that the history of JCIDC “has been a great run,” and as I review 2023 and look ahead to our 40th anniversary in 2024, I’m challenged to come up with a better phrase to use!

Last year, we saw one of the largest announcements for new investment occur; saw the conclusion of a comprehensive study by a nationally recognized firm; saw the implementation of a long-awaited training program; and saw the area continue to improve in national rankings for economic vitality. Bottom line ... 2023 was another terrific year for our organization as we celebrated our 39th anniversary.

In June, Walmart announced plans to invest \$108 million at its regional distribution center in Seymour as part of its overall growth plans. It is expected this investment is just the start of additional renovation plans in the coming years.

Walmart was one of nine successful projects during the year that saw nearly \$185.9 million

in “promised investment” announced. Since the Walmart investment will occur in 2024, that investment will be included among those which will occur this year. During 2023, Aisin U.S.A. Manufacturing Inc., Valeo, Cummins and O&K American Corp. announced major projects, as did E&H Tubing and S&J Excavation, both in Brownstown, and Seymour’s newest company, United Pipe and Tube.

Those investments, plus the new jobs created and those retained, helped keep Jackson County’s unemployment rate below state and national average and kept Seymour among the top micropolitans in the country.

POLICOM’s annual study ranked Seymour 59th out of 543 micropolitans in the U.S. (A micropolitan area must have a city of at least 10,000 people but less than 50,000. Indiana has 26 such areas, and Seymour ranked #2 in the state). Last year, Seymour was ranked 76th, and it is the ninth straight year that Seymour ranked in the top 100.

Work also continued on the state of Indiana’s READI (Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative) 2.0 program. Jackson County previously joined with Bartholomew and Jennings counties to form the South Central Indiana Talent Region, which was awarded nearly \$30 million in late 2021. Over \$7 million was designated for Jackson County projects and included workforce development/training, infrastructure and medical projects. Among those projects was the start of the Vincennes University maintenance training program.

In the works for years, the partnership with Vincennes became official in early November when a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held at the Jackson County Learning Center. Before the end of the year, the first two classes had completed their initial training. Support from the Seymour Redevelopment Commission as well as the Aisin companies of Jackson County, Valeo and Cummins allowed the project to occur, and expansion of that program already is being discussed as possible uses of READI 2.0 funds.

Those READI funds also are expected to come into play as the result of the Brookings Institution study, which was completed in 2023. Seymour-Jackson County had been selected by the Indiana Economic Development Corporation to be included in a study by the nationally known Brookings Institution. Many residents and other organizations were asked to participate in meetings as the future of the area was discussed before the report was completed and released in the third quarter of the year. **UPDATE in March 2024:** As this newsletter was prepared to go to press, several issues were raised in the community concerning the Brookings study. As a result, the future of READI 2.0 funds being used in Jackson County were in jeopardy in advance of the mid-April READI awards to be announced by IEDC.

REMC, PEOPLES BANK JOIN JCIDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At the JCIDC annual board meeting in February, it was announced two longtime contributors had decided to make Board-level contributions and that several other supporters were increasing their donations.

“We are pleased to report that The Peoples Bank and Jackson County REMC are now members of the board of directors,” said Marvin Veatch, JCIDC treasurer who also heads up the Resource Development committee. “REMC returns after having previously being on the board, and we’re happy to welcome The Peoples Bank,” he said, adding that Mark McKinney, president and CEO of REMC, and Will Spray, vice president of The Peoples Bank, have joined the board to represent those organizations.

In addition, several other organizations have made contributions to JCIDC, including Overhead Door Company of South Central Indiana (<https://www.overhaddoor.com/columbus-indiana>), Centra Credit Union (<https://www.centra.org/>), RBSK Partners (<https://www.rbsk.cpa/>), and Commercial Office Environments (<https://coeindy.com/>), plus JCIDC saw increased giving from JC Bank, Goecker Construction and SIHO.

JACKSON COUNTY CELEBRATES JAG DAY

Jobs for America’s Graduates students and specialists from Brownstown Central, Crothersville and Seymour high schools participated in the inaugural JAG Day on Feb. 29 at Aisin World Corp. in Seymour.

The event included guest speakers, a local employment panel and networking during lunch. Richard Paulk, commissioner of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, was the keynote speaker.

Also attending were representatives of JAG around the state; officials from Medora Community School Corp, which is adding JAG; and several local officials from the schools and community.

To end the day, Matt Nieman led trivia, where students formed teams of six, came up with a team name and answered questions on a variety of topics. The winning team received Walmart gift cards.



JAG Day – February 29

LOCAL STUDENTS QUALIFY FOR ROBOTICS STATE TOURNAMENT

Jackson County was well represented at the 2024 Indiana Robotics State Championship on March 23 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis

MEET THE PARTICIPANTS

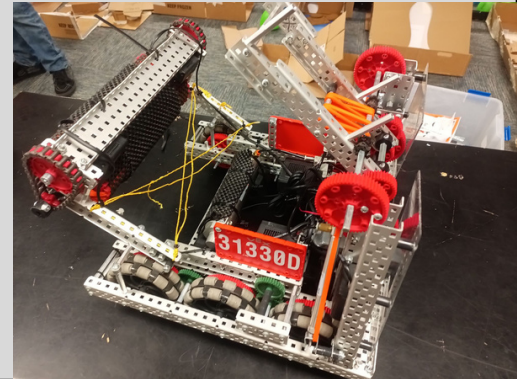
Seymour High School’s Team 31330D - **Micah Yee, Ethan Rubin, Noah Chambers and Gabe Seabolt**

Seymour Middle School’s Team 3138E - **Caydyn Parks, Ranfari Hernandez, Noah Hart and Logan Garcia**

Immanuel Lutheran School’s Team 520D - **Emersyn Dailey and Daniel Neawedde**

Lutheran Central School’s Team 47220B - **Evan Shoemaker, Collin McKinley, Hank Stuckwisch and Waylon Wolka**

Lutheran Central School’s Team 47220C - **Owen Brewster, Ryder Garrison and Brady England**



\$7,000 AWARDED THROUGH MAVERICK CHALLENGE, 3 ADVANCE TO REGIONAL



The 2024 Jackson County Maverick Challenge wrapped up Feb. 28 with the 10 finalists making presentations at the Jackson County Chamber in Seymour.

The winner was Brownstown Central High School's Bryce Peak with his business plan for Jackson County Drone Service. He won \$2,500. Placing second was Seymour High School's Jacob Rennekamp with Fresh Start Bins. He received \$2,000.

The remaining finalists received between \$100 and \$650. This year’s funding sponsors were JCBank, Jackson County Industrial Development Corp. Workforce Partnership, Jackson County Chamber, Seymour Main Street and Brownstown Ewing Main Street.

On March 5, it was announced three Jackson County teams advanced to the regional round of the state Innovate WithIN competition. They are among 10 teams in Region 6 in southeast Indiana to present their business plans in Jeffersonville on April 25.

They include Bryce Peak from Brownstown Central High School, Jacob Rennekamp from Seymour High School and Elmer Vicente from Seymour High School.

2024 Board of Directors

Kevin Gabbard, President
(Royalty Companies)
Curt Kovener, Vice President
(Town of Crothersville)
Marvin Veatch, Treasurer
(JCBank)
Matt Nicholson, VP Development
(City of Seymour)
Arann Banks, Secretary
(Jackson County Visitor Center)
Conner Barnette
(Brownstown Ewing Main Street)
Ron Carr
(Indiana American Water)
Dan Davis
(Community Foundation of Jackson County)
Ray Eakins
(Old National Bank)

Chris Engleking
(City of Seymour)
Eric Fish
(Schneck Medical Center)
Kylie Foster
(Duke Energy)
Brandon Goecker
(Goecker Construction)
Gregg Goshorn
(Brownstown EDA)
Brandon Harpe
(County School Superintendents)
Jeff Lorenzo
(Seymour Industrial Corporation)
Amanda Lowery
(Jackson County Council)
Craig Luedeman
(HWC Engineering)

Drew Markel
(County Commissioners)
Mark McKinney
(Jackson County REMC)
Doug Prather
(Ranger Enterprises)
Marilyn Price
(Owen County State Bank)
Tim Robinson
(Town of Brownstown)
Dan Robison
(Jackson County Chamber)
Katie Sackett
(Louisville & Indiana Railroad)
John Sadtler
(SIHO)
Will Spray
(The Peoples Bank)

Brian Thompson
(Seymour Airport Authority)
Karen Trotter
(RQAW)
Mike Weir
(Town of Medora)
Roger Wessel
(Berkshire Hathaway)
Bruce Wynn
(First Financial Bank)

JCIDC Staff

Jim Plump
 Tammy Hamp
 Jackie Hill
 Zach Spicer

Board Level

Berkshire Hathaway
 Brownstown Ewing Main Street
 Brownstown EDA
 Brownstown Town Council
 City of Seymour
 Community Foundation
 County Council
 County Commissioners
 Crothersville Town Council
 Duke Energy
 First Financial Bank
 Goecker Construction
 HWC Engineering
 Indiana American Water
 Jackson County Chamber
 Jackson County REMC
 Jackson County Visitor Center
 JCBank
 Louisville & Indiana Railroad
 Medora Town Council
 Old National Bank
 Owen County State Bank
 RQAW Corporation
 Ranger Enterprises LLC
 Royalty Companies
 Schneck Medical Center
 Seymour Airport Authority
 Seymour Industrial Corp.
 SIHO
 The Peoples Bank

Gold Level

Aisin USA Mfg. Inc.
 Biehle Electric
 CenterPoint Energy
 DEEM LLC
 FPBH Inc.
 German American Bank
 Jackson Township Trustee
 Lorenzo Bevers Braman & Connell
 Nippon Steel Pipe America
 SpaceGuard Products
 Vernon Township Trustee

Silver Level

Agresta, Storms & O'Leary
 Aisin Chemical Indiana
 Cerrowire
 Cornerstone Environmental
 Dunlap Construction
 Force Construction
 GAI Consultants
 Gaylor Electric
 Harmon Construction
 King's Trucking
 Lannett Company Inc.
 Lawyer Excavation
 Metronet
 Milestone
 Millman Realty Partners
 O&K American Corp.

Silver continued...

Overhead Door
 Rose Acre Farms
 Rumpke of Indiana
 State Bank of Medora
 The Tribune

Bronze Level

B&H Electric
 Blue & Co.
 CCL Holdings
 Centra Credit Union
 Independent Land Surveying
 RBSK Partners PC
 Shelby Materials

Contributor Level

Aisin Drivetrain Inc.
 BK Media LLC
 Commercial Office
 Environments (COE)
 Dennis & Blish CPA
 Harrell-Fish Inc.
 Jackson Co. Water Utility
 Midwest Natural Gas
 Mussett Nicholas
 Reedy Financial Group
 Shepherd Insurance

Beatty Insurance
 Bob Poynter Family of Dealerships
 Duke Energy

First Financial Bank
 Force Construction
 Harrell-Fish Inc.

Indiana American Water
 Kocolene/Ranger
 JC Bank

Special Event Sponsors

Workforce Partnership

Aisin Chemical Indiana
 Aisin Drivetrain Inc.
 Aisin USA Mfg. Inc.
 Brownstown Quality Tool
 Brownstown Community Schools
 Cerrowire
 City of Seymour
 Community Foundation
 Elwood Staffing
 Excel Manufacturing
 E & H Tubing
 Jackson County Visitor Center
 Jackson County Education
 Coalition
 Lannett Company Inc.
 Nippon Steel Pipe America
 O&K American Corp.
 Particle Dynamics
 RR Donnelley
 Rose Acre Farms
 Schneck Medical Center
 Seymour Community Schools
 Seymour Engine Plant



CUMMINS, DICKSONS ANNOUNCE PLANS FOR EXPANSION

Two Seymour companies announced plans for projected investment of more than \$20 million during first quarter of 2024.

During a meeting on February 12th, the Seymour City Council approved tax abatement for Cummins and Dicksons Inc., as well as Templeton Commercial Properties LLC, the real estate arm of Dicksons' parent company.

Cummins submitted statements of benefits (two real estate improvement and three personal property) for different projects within the company's Seymour Engine Plant along East Fourth Street Road. The real estate improvements total \$4.3 million, while the three personal property investments total \$13,022,041. The real estate improvements will allow for expansion and facility improvements to its Seymour campus and capacity expansion of the Hedgehog line, while the personal property investments include manufacturing equipment for Project GZ04, expansion of the Seymour Technical Center with machinery, test cells and facilities and machinery and equipment for the expansion of the Hedgehog line.

Templeton Commercial applied for a 10-year tax abatement on new investment of \$3,464,100 for construction of a 58,575-square-foot expansion to its Dicksons Inc. building at 2025 First Ave. in the Freeman Field Industrial Park. In addition, Dicksons received a 10-year tax abatement on the purchase of \$408,500 in new logistics equipment.

The expansions will allow Dicksons to retain its current workforce of 68 with a payroll of \$2,849,000, and Cummins will retain its workforce of 881 with a payroll of more than \$78 million.

During the meeting, Jim Plump of JCIDC also reported on Cummins' compliance with statement of benefits for 15 personal property and 11 real property investments. The total amount of personal property investment on the abatements over the last 10 years was \$103,861,335, and the total for real property was \$53,236,080. The initial projections were 433 employees and \$33.7 million in payroll, but both numbers have nearly or more than doubled.



Zach Spicer
 JCIDC Workforce
 Partnership Coordinator
 and Social Media
 Director

SPICER JOINS JCIDC STAFF

JCIDC is pleased to announce that Zach Spicer has joined the staff as Workforce Partnership Coordinator and Social Media Director. Spicer is from Austin and graduated from Austin High School in 2001 and Indiana University Southeast in 2006, earning a bachelor's degree in journalism. In 2007, he started as a reporter for The Tribune. He served as sports editor from 2008 to 2014 and then got back into the

news side. He remained at The Tribune until the end of February 2024 before going to work for JCIDC. He is a 2014 graduate of Leadership Jackson County and serves on the Special Olympics Indiana Jackson County county management team as treasurer and public relations and the Anchor House Family Assistance Center and Pantry board of directors as secretary. While he is not from Jackson County, he has enjoyed getting involved in the community and giving back whenever possible in the place he calls home.

SEYMOUR'S NATIONAL RANKING IMPROVES

Seymour gained 17 places in the annual POLICOM rankings for micropolitan areas with the 2024 rankings showing Seymour ranking 59th out of 543 micropolitans across the United States.

A micropolitan area must have a city of at least 10,000 people but fewer than 50,000. Economic Strength is the long-term tendency for an area to consistently grow in both size and quality. POLICOM considers 23 economic factors over a 20-year period to determine the strength of an area.

Seymour broke into the top 100 in 2016 and has remained there for nine straight years. Over the past five years, the Jackson County community was ranked 76th in 2023, 56th, 83rd and 97th. Since micropolitan areas are relatively small, thus less diversified, they are subject to rapid economic change, causing them to fluctuate, year by year, in POLICOM's rankings.

There are 26 micropolitans in the state of Indiana; Seymour ranks second behind only Washington, which is 21st this year after a 49th rating in 2023.