

JCIDC  
QUARTERLY



Seymour  
JACKSON COUNTY INDIANA

Jackson County Industrial Development Corporation

1ST  
QUARTER  
2026

## AISIN DRIVETRAIN BEGINS PARTNERSHIP WITH MAZDA

Eight months.

That's the time it took to transform an empty floor space at AISIN Drivetrain Inc. in Crothersville to set up equipment and produce six-speed automatic transmissions for its newest customer, Japanese automotive company Mazda.

Two years ago, ADI ended a 12-year relationship with Stellantis for heavy-duty transmissions. AISIN and Mazda then began working on a joint venture for another localization project for a six-speed transmission, known as M-Z01, for the CX-30 and CX-50 crossover SUVs.



**A first shipment ceremony was conducted March 10 at AISIN Drivetrain Inc. in Crothersville celebrating the new Mazda transmission business.**

From being awarded the business to the full start of production, 13 months passed. By August 2025, equipment was installed. In January of this year, ADI conducted the first preproduction build staffed with all ADI members.

ADI was founded Oct. 1, 1996, and was the first company established in the Crothersville Industrial Park. ADI manufactures a wide range of products for customers in the automotive and heavy equipment industries, including Toyota, Lexus, Honda, Stellantis and now, Mazda. The products include industrial and commercial transmissions, electric rear axles, electric water pumps and power steering columns.

## BROWNSTOWN SENIOR WINS MAVERICK CHALLENGE JACKSON COUNTY

Brownstown Central High School senior Cassidy Wischmeier is the winner of the 2026 Maverick Challenge Jackson County.



**Brownstown Central High School senior Cassidy Wischmeier presents her business plan for GreenPath Learning during the Maverick Challenge Jackson County oral presentations March 4 at the Community Foundation of Jackson County in Seymour.**

She was among 11 finalists in the high school business plan competition giving oral presentations to a panel of four judges March 4 at the Community Foundation of Jackson County in Seymour.

Her business plan is for GreenPath Learning, which offers greenhouses, supplies and curriculum for schools.

For winning the competition, Wischmeier received \$2,500. Sponsors of the program are JCIDC Workforce Partnership, Brownstown Ewing Main Street, Seymour Main Street and the Jackson County Chamber. JCBank is the funding partner.

Overall, \$7,000 was up for grabs for the finalists. Coming in second place and winning \$1,500 was Seymour High School's Brooklyn Howell with her business plan for Bridge Within.

Placing third and receiving a total of \$750 are Brownstown Central High School's Kaylee Steward, Kayla Bowman and Eulah Beavers for BetterChews.

**(SEE MAVERICK CHALLENGE, PAGE 3)**

## JCIDC WELCOMES TWO NEW CONTRIBUTORS

Two new contributors to Jackson County Industrial Development Corp. were announced during the first quarter of the year.

Crane Hill Machine & Fabrication Inc. and Seymour Midwest have joined the growing list of companies supporting JCIDC, reported Marvin Veatch, head of the resource development committee and treasurer of the organization.

Crane Hill Machine is a precision manufacturer of a wide range of plastic and metal parts and components located on U.S. 50 between Seymour and Brownstown. The company is ISO-9001:2008 registered, has been in operation for more than 30 years and continues to grow along with its customers, offering a full range of services from design, build, finish and delivery at its 100,000-square-foot facility.

Seymour Midwest is a family-owned, global supplier to the hand tools market, providing products from its manufacturing facilities in Indiana and Tennessee. The company sells more than 3,500 tools and 8,000 different repair handles to contractors, handymen, farmers, ranchers, landscapers and others worldwide.

"Both companies are supporting our organization as well as our Workforce Partnership," said Veatch, adding that nearly 100 organizations and companies are contributors to JCIDC. "We appreciate their support and confidence."



JCIDC Board President Kevin Gabbard

## PRESIDENT’S REPORT: PARTNERSHIPS CRITICAL TO SUCCESS

Every year, I seem to struggle with how to begin the president’s report to make it sound fresh and not simply a rehash of the previous year. As the economy in Jackson County remains relatively strong, the support of JCIDC has certainly been part of that and was again in 2025.

Last year was a record-breaking year, as more than \$265 million in new promised investment was announced. That was an all-time high, exceeding the previous best \$198.5 million in 2024 and \$177.1 million in 2013.

The Workforce Partnership also reported a solid year with expanded programs for career awareness and partnerships with schools and local businesses. The sheer volume of student “touches” by these programs was impressive.

I have had the pleasure of serving as president of the JCIDC board of directors since 2014, and as JCIDC completed its 41st year of existence, we continued to follow the organization’s mission statement: Jackson County Industrial Development Corp. is a not-for-profit public/private partnership charged with raising the local standard of living and improving the area tax base by attracting quality employers and assisting with the expansion and competitiveness of local industries.

The year’s promised investment number included an increase in the new Vital Farms project when they announced their investment in a new facility at Seymour’s Eastside Industrial Park would increase to \$190 million for their egg sorting, packing and distribution facility. Company officials project their new facility to be operational by the end of this year with more than 400 new employees.

Vital’s investment, combined with announcements by MAK Steel Services, Guardian Bikes, Cummins Inc., AISIN USA Mfg. Inc. and Nippon Steel Pipe America Inc. in Seymour, plus AISIN Drivetrain Inc. and AISIN Chemical Indiana LLC in Crothersville and Nehrwess USA, E&H Tubing Inc. and Brownstown Quality Tool & Automation LLC in Brownstown, took the 2025 total to \$265,693,863.

Speaking of Guardian Bikes, the story of their beginning and securing some funding from “Shark Tank” has been documented many times. Last summer, Shark Tanker Mark Cuban was in Seymour at Guardian and graciously agreed to film an interview with longtime JCIDC Executive Director Jim Plump about doing business in Jackson County. That interview was used to produce another in our series of marketing videos along with Scott Shade of AISIN World Corp. of America. The video can be viewed on our website, [jcidc.com](http://jcidc.com).

In addition, JCIDC continued to be heavily involved in the state’s READI program, which will ultimately see \$60 million invested in the three-county region of Jackson, Bartholomew and Jennings. Upgrading the water system at the Crothersville Industrial Park and providing new infrastructure at Seymour’s Eastside Industrial Park are two READI projects totaling more than \$3 million, and others include focus on education and training.

To lead that workforce development effort, JCIDC created its Workforce Partnership more than 25 years ago. Under the guidance of Jackie Hill, the Partnership reported these results in 2025:

### Career awareness

- Career College Transition Fair: 1,800 students from five high schools and 60+ businesses and organizations
- Reality Fair: 600 eighth graders from all county middle schools participated along with 64 community volunteers
- MFG Day: 100 students from four high schools interacted with four industries, including host Cummins Seymour Engine Plant, Pet Supplies Plus, Guardian Bikes and AISIN USA Mfg. Inc.
- JAG Day: AISIN World Corp. of America welcomed 40 JAG students from four high schools
- Mock interviews: JCIDC helps coordinate mock interviews at five of the six county high schools
- Educator Externship: Eight industries hosted 20 educators for summer visits

### Partnerships with schools— curriculum and programming

- Maverick Challenge Jackson County: 74 students, four high schools, 40+ community volunteers
- VEX Robotics: Teams at 21 public and private elementary and middle schools, homeschool, Boys & Girls Club and 4-H competed with more than 200 students engaged. In addition, there are programs at three county high schools, and there were seven county teams that participated in the state competition.
- Summer robotics camp: For elementary and middle school students
- Jobs for America’s Graduates: 80 students at two high schools

### Partnership— JCLC and JCEC training

The aforementioned READI program saw funds allocated for industrial maintenance training classes at the Jackson County Learning Center in Seymour. The state funds were matched locally by the Seymour Redevelopment Commission through the Jackson County Education Coalition and with funds from the state’s certified tech park.

- Vincennes University: 24 classes have been completed (16 basic and eight intermediate) with 88 individuals earning 182 certificates. In addition to the big three (AISIN, Cummins and Valeo), 10 companies have enrolled employees in the program.

All of these activities from 2025 show the tremendous impact JCIDC has had on the economic well-being of not only Jackson County but the three-county READI region as well as the 10-county South Central Indiana regional marketing group.

The partnerships that have been created are critical to our success, as is the support of our contributors and 31-person board of directors to support the staff of Plump, Hill and Zach Spicer, who heads up JCIDC’s social media and supports the Workforce Partnership. That trio was joined by Becky Killian late in the year, and I would be remiss if I didn’t mention Dee Kovener, who came to our rescue on a temporary basis earlier in the year.



**Community Foundation of Jackson County President and CEO Dan Davis recently presented checks from two designated funds that support Jackson County Industrial Development Corp. to JCIDC Workforce Director Jackie Hill. The Seymour Industrial Association Fund and the Jody Deckard Workforce Development Endowment Fund generate reliable annual income to JCIDC to support the organization’s operations.**



**JCIDC Workforce Partnership Coordinator and Social Media Director Zach Spicer is joined by Cummins Seymour Engine Plant representatives Lisa Williams, left, and Ashley Sargent after the announcement of JCIDC receiving a \$5,000 grant from the Cummins Foundation.**

## • MAVERICK CHALLENGE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

There was a tie for fourth place between Seymour High School's Lanie Booher with Glam On the Go and Brownstown Central High School's Haleigh Drake with Subber Bowl. Both received \$425.

There also was a tie for fifth place. Medora High School's Bobby Baughman and Angel Chan-Cux with Sensus by BBB and Seymour High School's Lydia Holle and Juana Nicolas with Fun Delivery each received \$300 total.

Brownstown Central High School's Veronica Law with Artist's Alley earned honorable mention and \$200, while Crothersville High School's Isaac Spencer and Cooper Brown with S & R Drones, Seymour High School's Israel Luna and Hayato Hattori with Lunar Lanes and Brownstown Central High School's Reece Osborne and Gabriel Davers with SportiBotics each received participation awards valued at \$200 total.

Initially, there were 56 teams from Brownstown Central, Crothersville, Medora and Seymour high schools in the competition. Twenty-two of them turned in a business plan and a video, and local business volunteers judged those and narrowed them down to the finalists.

For winning the Maverick Challenge, Wischmeier will compete in the local SPARK Tank competition in the fall with the chance to win up to \$10,000. She also entered the STARTedUP Challenge Regionals and is among Region 6 southeast Indiana participants who will compete April 21 at Maker13 in Jeffersonville.

Maverick Challenge began in 2008 in Bartholomew County, and Jackson County joined the program in 2011. Three years ago, Bartholomew County ended the program, but Jackson County leaders kept it going in the county with a partnership between the four sponsors and the funding partner.

### **BROWNSTOWN, SEYMOUR STUDENTS ATTEND JAG DAY**

JCIDC's third annual Jackson County JAG Day was March 31 at the Jackson County Learning Center in Seymour.

Thirty-three Jobs for America's Graduates students from Brownstown Central and Seymour high schools attended along with their JAG specialists, Michelle Brock of BCHS and Celeste Bowman of SHS.

In the morning, the students split into groups and rotated between four workshops. Job search/postsecondary was led by Tina Hacker and Yesenia Otero with Pet Supplies Plus. Health care was led by Jena Hanks with Healthy Jackson County and Carrie Schryer and Paul Ramsey with the Jackson County Health Department. Financial was led by Sehrish Sangamkar and Ricardo Gamboa with Centra Credit Union and Amanda Barlow and Derek Green with First Financial Bank. Living skills was led by Maci Baurle with Jackson County United Way and Jeri Wells with Seymour Housing Authority.

After lunch and networking, JCLC Director Amy Heideman led each school group on a tour of the learning center. Then the students split into teams and played trivia. Walmart gift cards were given to the winning team.



**Jobs for America's Graduates students from Seymour High School, left top, and Brownstown Central High School, left bottom, attended JCIDC's third annual Jackson County JAG Day on March 31 at the Jackson County Learning Center in Seymour.**

### **FOUR COUNTY TEAMS COMPETE IN ROBOTICS STATE CHAMPIONSHIP**

Jackson County was represented by four teams at the 2026 Indiana Robotics State Championship on March 14 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.



In the VEX IQ elementary school competition, Z Engineers Team 1597Z from Jackson County Homeschool Robotics made it to the top 32 and placed 25th out of 124 teams. Team members are third grader Raychael Timberlake, fifth grader James Timberlake and sixth graders Micah McIntyre and Eli Nolan. They are coached by Diana Nolan and Amy Timberlake.



The other county team in the elementary competition was RoboSaints Team 47220C from Lutheran Central School in Brownstown. They placed 92nd. Team members are sixth graders Kyler Briner, Vivian Henry, Theodore McKinley and Bryce Tormoehlen. They are coached by Andrea McKinley.



The only county team in the VEX IQ middle school competition was Team 520D from Immanuel Lutheran School in Seymour, which placed 51st out of 100 teams. Team members are sixth grader Bennett Easton, seventh graders Pierson Murphy, Elizabeth Scheiderer and Gabrian Wilkins and eighth grader Elijah Kamman. They are coached by Nick Moore.



Participating in the VEX V5 high school competition was Dynasty Team 31330D from Seymour High School. They placed 34th out of 64 teams. Team members are sophomore Kaeden Leonard and juniors Noah Chambers, Nikita Cox, Kellan Stanfield and Micah Yee. They are coached by Amy Jo Miller Kuzel.

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