

# Business E-Zine



**Juneau County Economic  
Development Corporation**

October 2013

## **Juneau County Economic Development Corporation (JCEDC) expands partnership with the Wisconsin Procurement Institute (WPI) to bring new business opportunities to Central and Western Wisconsin.**

WPI has expanded their operations and has selected the JCEDC facility in Camp Douglas as their newest satellite office. The office will serve Wisconsin's Central and Western counties as well as suppliers supporting Ft. McCoy and Volk Field.

JCEDC has been working with WPI for almost 10 years and are very pleased that we will have their expertise available to businesses in the region. Business development is a primary focus of our work and we are looking forward to bringing this resource to the area business community.

"WPI's expertise will be available to businesses currently working with the government as well as those considering entering the market. Although federal budgets are currently stressed, the government will continue to purchase goods and services from high quality firms and will continue to spend billions of dollars. Firms that can meet and exceed the requirements and can add value continue to be in demand. Areas such as cyber, energy, security, homeland defense will continue to be a priority," commented Aina Vilumsons, Executive Director, WPI.

The WPI office is located in Camp Douglas at the Juneau County Economic Development Corporation facility, 122 Main St, Camp Douglas. Business owners interested in obtaining free assistance in support of their government sales efforts, can schedule an appointment by contacting David Olson at 608-427-2455 or [davido@wispro.org](mailto:davido@wispro.org)

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## **Wisconsin Procurement Institute (WPI)**

WPI is a non-profit organization established in 1987, is an outgrowth of then Congressman Les Aspin's efforts to help Wisconsin businesses win federal contracts, especially defense contracts. WPI's mission is to assist Wisconsin businesses in creating, developing and growing their Federal, State and Local Government sales, revenues, profits and jobs.



[www.wispro.org](http://www.wispro.org)

## Local Representative Participates in Multi-State Economic Development Meeting

Representatives from sixteen states met in Montpelier, Vermont during the week of September 9, 2013 to hold the Partners for Rural America annual meeting, reinforce collaborations and visit successful community vitality and entrepreneurship activities.

Considerable focus was given to examining Vermont's very successful "local food to table" systems. Bonnie Peterson, president of Juneau County Economic Development Corp., participated as a representative of Wisconsin Rural Partners, Inc. and a retiring board member of Partners for Rural America.

Partners for Rural America is the national arm of the State Rural Development Councils (SRDCs). The SRDCs are federally recognized through the National Rural Development Partnership and the federal Farm Bill. State councils provide a variety of services including hosting educational forums, highlighting best practices, and providing community assessments that help rural communities engage in priority setting and planning efforts. SRDCs actualize the mission of the National Rural Development Partnership by sharing examples of best practices, serving as neutral conveners, brokers of new partnerships, and facilitators of progress.

PRA convenes the State Rural Development Councils to share experiences, coordinate policy and program work that crosses state boundaries, and to support the national advancement of rural development efforts. Given its mission from the Farm Bill, PRA is a unique bridge building organization of the state councils and helps them

collaborate across sectors, coordinate program development and implementation and support models for community success. All councils work to connect local rural communities to regional, state, federal, non-profit and private sector resources to enable them to move forward and accomplish their long term priorities and build leadership.

During the meeting, PRA also strengthened its ties with the Rural Policy Research Institute and its President and CEO Chuck Fluharty and representatives from state policy centers in nine states. The meeting was enhanced by visits and comments by Speaker of the Vermont House of Representatives Shap Smith, Secretary of Administration Jeb Spaulding, and Lt. Governor Phil Scott.

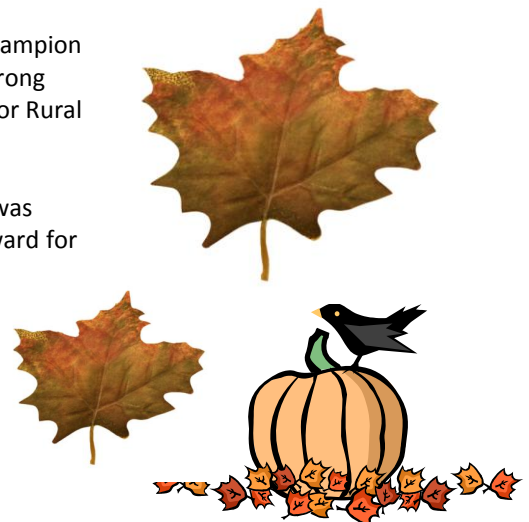
PRA elected its sixteen member board representing eight districts from across the county. It also elected its officers as follows: Chair: Jerry Townsend, Illinois Rural Partners; Vice-Chair: Mike Field, Idaho Rural Partnership; Secretary: Mary Ann Hayes, Maine Rural Partners; and Treasurer: Mary Randolph, Wyoming Rural Development Council.

Congressman Peter Welch of Vermont was awarded the Champion of Rural America award for strong ongoing support of Partners for Rural America. Ricky Rolfsmeyer of Wisconsin Rural Partners and immediate past chair of PRA was presented the Ron Shaffer Award for Excellence in Collaborative

Leadership. The Ron Shaffer Award is presented to an individual who embodies the values, skills and impacts necessary to build a national and state rural development partnership that meets the needs of rural America. The award is named after the late professor from UW-Madison whose impact in the field of community economic development is known worldwide, through his leadership in the University of Wisconsin - Extension, Center for Community Economic Development, Community Development Society, and National Rural Economic Development Institute, to name a few. He was one of the pioneers of the Community Economic Analysis process now widely used around the world today, and the Community Economic Preparedness Index measuring tool for communities.

For more information, visit PRA's website at [www.partnersforruralamerica.org](http://www.partnersforruralamerica.org)

For more information, visit Wisconsin Rural Partners at [www.wirural.org](http://www.wirural.org)



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## The Value of Innovation and the Role of the I&E Club in the Local Community

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When I stepped into the role of helping Juneau County's economy, I took a birds-eye view of what was happening in the rural community economy as well as workforce trends. What I saw was the following: The risks and rewards of entrepreneurialism were being downplayed; in fact, the community culture supporting entrepreneurialism had diminished to the point where even the exploration of ideas was considered dangerous. Failure at any step of the business building process was considered so traumatic that support for budding innovators and entrepreneurs was scarce.

At the same time, there were noticeable changes within our communities and our economies, especially in rural areas. Overall, things were speeding up. New innovations, productivity gains, automation, off-shoring and obsolescence were quickly transforming America into a country that needed fewer and fewer employees, especially those in low skilled labor. Many low skilled labor jobs had disappeared altogether.

To address these changes, Juneau County formed the first Inventors & Entrepreneurs (I&E) Club in 2003. Our goal was not necessarily to create new businesses or jobs but to bring forward a culture that supported and encouraged the exploration of ideas within our communities, thus helping to build a base of people who knew how to explore these ideas. If we were successful, we knew new businesses and jobs would follow suit.

The I&E Club concept was a grassroots movement that was open to any community to copy or adjust as it saw fit. At one point, over 40 I&E clubs existed in Wisconsin and an unknown number had cropped up in the Midwest.

There was never a central "I&E Club command" or any formal organizational structure; as a result, many I&E clubs formed and transformed on their own. Many I&E clubs became successful. However,

as their founders or champions moved on, many I&E programs ceased to exist except in name only, as a light network of like-minded individuals. Still, about a dozen Wisconsin I&E clubs have flourished. The Juneau County I&E Club is one of these clubs and continues to go strong in its 11th year, hosting 25-75 attendees each month.

I became associated with Evansville via Judy Whalen, who was hired by Evansville to lead the community through its Economic Development Plan. Judy had been to a number of Juneau County I&E Club meetings and really understood the need for grassroots level entrepreneurial support. Judy also introduced me to another person that really got it- that person was Mayor Sandy Decker. Mayor Decker invited me to speak at the Economic Development Summit and to facilitate the first Evansville Area I&E Club meeting later on.

The first Evansville I&E Club meeting was a fantastic and energetic event. Our meeting room was filled with a diverse array of individuals, which is great because diversity propagates the development of ideas. In fact, it is only when you have inventors, businesspeople, artists, investors, manufacturers and entrepreneurial resources that you attain an entrepreneurial culture.

I commend Evansville for not only understanding the forces of economic change but for moving aggressively to energize its citizens to step out and innovate, create, take risks and fail, and finally, to succeed. The future does not belong to those who are the strongest or the smartest but to those who are best able to adapt.

Finally, being successful as an entrepreneur is a lot like the lottery: You can't win if you don't play. The residents of Evansville are out there playing- and that's a great thing!

-Terry Whipple, JCEDC

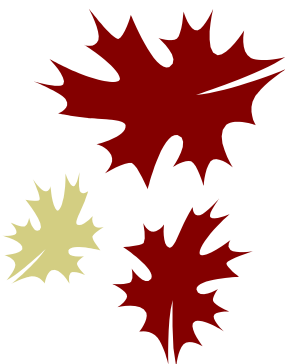


*JCEDC Holiday Party*  
*Wednesday, December 4, 2013*  
*5:30 pm - To be held at*  
*Target Bluff*  
*208 State Rd 12&16*  
*Camp Douglas*



## 2014 JCEDC Community Meeting Dates

Wednesday, February 26	6:00 pm	Mauston	City Hall	303 Mansion Street
Wednesday, April 23	6:00 pm	Necedah	Village Hall	100 Center Street
JCEDC Annual Meeting Wednesday, May 14	5:00 pm	To Be Announced		
Wednesday, June 25	6:00 pm	Elroy	Elroy Library	501 2 <sup>nd</sup> Main Street
Wednesday, August 27	6:00 pm	New Lisbon	City Hall	232 W Pleasant Street
Wednesday, September 24	6:00 pm	Lyndon Station	Village Hall	121 Lemonweir Street
JCEDC Christmas Party Wednesday, December 10	5:30 pm	Target Bluff Restaurant		208 State Rd 12/16, Camp Douglas
Due to circumstances beyond our control, these dates may change. Any changes to this schedule will be published in the monthly minutes.				



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***Juneaucounty.com***  
*The Official County Website*

