

Indian River County Chamber of Commerce

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**Economic Leadership Alliance**

Leading the way to a healthy economy

**Indian River County  
Chamber of Commerce  
Economic Development Division**

**FY 2010-2011 Annual Report  
to the  
Indian River County Board of County  
Commissioners**

December 16, 2011

# Economic Development Annual Report October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011

## Administrative

### Local Government Funding

Indian River County Chamber of Commerce is designated as the primary economic development organization in the county. As such, the Board of County Commissioners has appropriated funds from General Revenue to the Chamber's Economic Development Division (EDD) to conduct economic development activities on their behalf.

Each spring, the EDD submits a detailed budget requesting funds for the upcoming fiscal year through the county's budget process. In fiscal year 2010-11, the County appropriated \$119,332 of which the entire amount was expended. The EDD is reimbursed for eligible expenses from this encumbered amount.

### Private Sector Funding

Over the years, the Chamber's EDD has encouraged private businesses to invest in economic development through the Private Industry Partner program. Under this program, \$42,000 was received in FY2010-11. EDD funds are kept in a separate account from Chamber-generated funds.

Beginning in November 2011, EDD has reorganized and strengthened private investor opportunities through the **Economic Leadership Alliance** program. Investment levels are greatly increased with new and increased investments from the private sector. A funding campaign is currently underway (November 2011 – March 2012) to raise an additional \$70,000 in private sector funds, of which the County Commission has offered to match on a 1:3 basis. At this date, funding is also being considered by some municipalities.

### Administrative Costs

EDD's administrative costs are shared between county funds and private sector funds, including salaries, building insurance, an annual audit as required by the county, copies and supplies. General overhead costs, such as electricity and rent, are paid by the Chamber and not charged to EDD.

## Business Development

### Announced Projects

- In June, **Communications International** announced they are expanding operations in Indian River County to create 12 jobs paying an average wage of \$55,000 – a direct economic impact of \$660,000. This is a local multi-faceted communications firm that creates and manages custom communications solutions.

The ED office facilitated a successful Local Jobs Grant on behalf of Communications International in the amount of \$68,000.

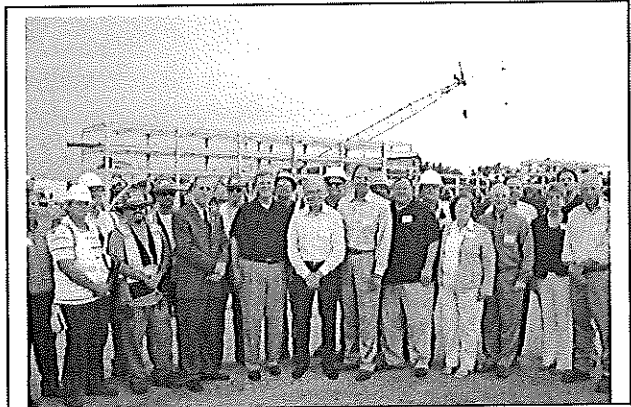
- In July, **SMI Telecoms**, an internet monitoring and networking firm based in the U.K., announced it is locating its U.S. headquarters to Sebastian, creating 25 jobs paying an average wage of \$75,600 – a direct economic impact of \$1.89 million.

The ED office began working with the firm in early 2011, facilitating a successful Local Jobs Grant on behalf of SMI Telecoms in the amount of \$169,000.

## Continuing Projects

### INEOS New Planet BioEnergy Center

- Participated in the company's groundbreaking ceremony, with over 150 in attendance, including: representatives from the U.S. Department of Energy, the USDA, along with state and local elected officials, project investors, and local media.
- Facilitated several meetings between company executives and county staff as it relates to construction permits and associated fees.
- Over \$3.8 million has already been paid to the county in permit and demolition fees since 2010. The company estimates a total capital investment of \$130 million in land, equipment and construction costs



*U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack (center, black golf shirt) visited the project site in August; Peter Williams, CEO of INEOS Bio, is to his left*

## Active Projects

- In July, **Girard Equipment** notified the ED office they needed a larger facility to accommodate increased employment due to high demand for their products. The company, which relocated to Gifford from New Jersey, manufactures pressure relief valves used in the tank container industry, and is one of only a few companies worldwide to make these products.

The company initially considered a location in St. Lucie County when searching out larger buildings. The ED office provided the owner information on suitable buildings and sites in Indian River County along with information on potential incentives available and comparisons on tax liabilities between the two counties.

In October, 2011, the company announced it was expanding in Indian River County and adding 20 new jobs.

- The ED office began working with the president of **Boston Barricades** in May, discussing the company's operations, possible consolidation plans, and explaining state and local programs available. In December, 2011, the company announced plans to relocate its manufacturing operations to Indian River County creating 28 new jobs.
- In July, the ED office spoke with the manager of a local firm with its headquarters in Deerfield Beach. Locally, the company does assembly and repair work on hydraulic pumps and pumping systems. They are considering expanding the local operations to include a manufacturing component, adding 30 new jobs to the 30 employees currently on staff. Toured the facility with Commissioner O'Bryan.
- The ED office hosted a **German solar manufacturer**, coordinating a reception for higher-level investors and elected officials, and individual meetings with local bankers. The company anticipates 40 employees and an estimated capital investment of \$4.1 million. The firm continues its due diligence in securing appropriate financing. This was a lead from Enterprise FL disseminated to local EDOs in 12/2008.



- **Florida Organic Aquaculture** is a start-up company planning to raise restaurant-grade seafood, with roots in South Africa and an interest in locating to Fellsmere.
  - Participated in an interview for a video promoting the benefits of locating to Indian River County. The video is being produced by to be used to solicit potential investors at an upcoming trade show in China.
  - Coordinated a presentation by the company president to members of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council CEDS Committee (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy).
  - The company was one of six firms invited to present their plans at an “Entrepreneurial Summit” hosted by Congressman Posey.
- **Solar Panel Manufacturing**
  - The ED office facilitated meetings with IRSC to discuss potential training grants available to the company
  - The company has signed it first contract to sell panels to a commercial user
  - The firm partnered with the ED Office to promote Indian River County as a business location by attending several industry trade shows in Sweden and distributing our promotional thumb drives to interested businesses.

#### Prospect Activity

- The **Indian River Industrial Park**, formerly known as Indian River Park of Commerce, has new ownership: Victor Paulius & Associates, a real estate/development firm based in New Jersey, with property holdings throughout the East Coast. The firm is marketing the Park for long-term leases rather than selling parcels.
- With input from commercial real estate partners, the ED office responded to **14 domestic and international leads** from Enterprise Florida.
- Responded to **65 inquiries from ads** placed in 2010 with *Business Facilities* magazine.

#### Site Consultant/Trade Show Activity

- Participated in one-on-one meetings with seven site location consultants as a partner in an **Enterprise Florida Site Consultant** event; sent follow-up packages to consultants and added the consultants’ names to an email distribution list for future announcement notifications.
- Attended the **National Business Aviation Association** trade show to promote Indian River County as a business location to exhibitors.
- Attended a Site Consultant panel discussion, with **presentations from 14 site consultants** representing the following industries: data centers, advanced manufacturing, distribution centers and logistics, emerging markets. Sent follow-up packages to consultants and added the consultants’ names to an email distribution list for future announcement notifications.
- Promoted Indian River County at the following **trade shows**, as part of our agreement with Site Location Partnership:
  - NBAA Aviation Convention, Atlanta - 21 prospective companies with expansion/relocation plans
  - Pack Expo 2011 in Las Vegas, NV – packaging and machinery expo; 19 prospective companies with expansion or relocation plans

- MD&M/Plastec West in Anaheim, CA - medical, plastics, aerospace, electronics, packaging, automotive, and clean technology industries; 33 prospective companies with expansion/relocation plans
- PROMAT/Automate, Chicago - manufacturing, warehousing, distribution/logistics, automation technology, assembly, robotics, and IT operations; 26 prospective companies with expansion/relocation plans
- WindPower Expo, Anaheim - wind energy service providers and manufacturers of turbines, turbine components, blades, towers, and industrial equipment for the wind power supply chain; 20 prospective companies with expansion/relocation plans

### **Business Retention**

- Conducted ten business retention visits:
  - ForeGolf, in conjunction with Commissioner Fleischer – produce and assemble golf simulator software and equipment; signed a contract with PGA Academy; sell to military bases and cruise ships, partner with schools
  - Pristine Diesel, with Commissioner O’Bryan – start-up company producing diesel from grease; enrolled in UCF incubator program (the company has since closed)
  - Child Stocks, Inc. – develops software for children’s online educational gaming applications, focusing on financial education
  - Total Golf Construction – met with accounting staff to explain Enterprise Zone benefits
  - Piper Aircraft – met with Finance staff to explain Enterprise Zone benefits
  - Community Asphalt – met with owner and accounting staff to explain Enterprise Zone benefits
  - AZZLY, with Commissioner O’Bryan – AZZLY develops fully integrated software for Electronic Health Record (ECR) systems
  - Communications International, with Commissioner O’Bryan – a multi-faceted communications firm; anticipates creating 12 new jobs in the next year; successful in securing a Local Jobs Grant
  - Felix’s Place Restaurant - met with owner and accounting staff to explain Enterprise Zone benefits
  - Plant Foods, Inc., with Commissioner O’Bryan – manufacture nutrients for hydroponics and fertilizer for the citrus industry; recognized as the Chamber’s 2011 Small Manufacturer of the Year
- Distributed monthly Enterprise FL international trade leads to manufacturers, and information on several training opportunities
- Conducted an economic development tour of the CVS distribution facility with 11 participants

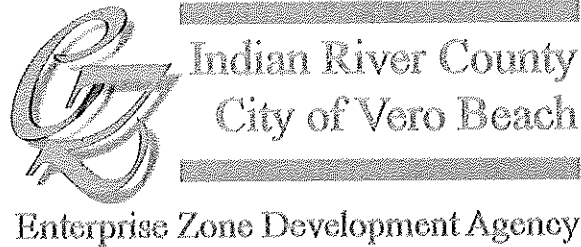
### **General Business Assistance**

- Assisted 37 individuals with information on local demographics, statistics, and establishing a business in Indian River County
- Coordinated a Job Fair in partnership with Workforce Solutions and the Indian River Mall, with 26 employers and hundreds of job seekers.



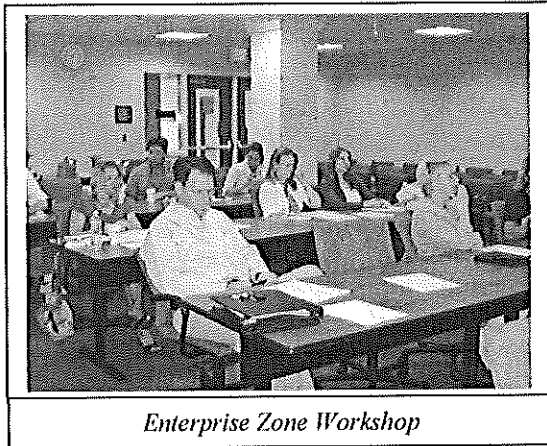
## Programs

- Voters approved the **Property Tax Exemption** referendum county-wide, providing eligible businesses that make major improvements to their property to apply for tax exemptions on property and tangible taxes for up to ten years based on job creation and capital investment. This adds yet another incentive to our local Economic Development “tool kit”, along with the Local Jobs Grant program, Enterprise Zone program, HUBZone benefits, and the County Commissioners’ Opportunity Fund, funds that can be used at the Board’s discretion.



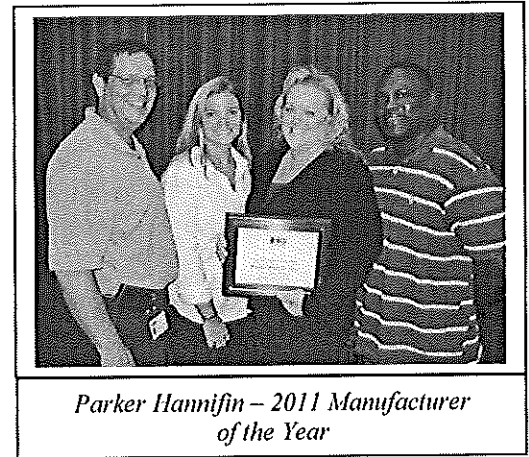
### 2010-11 Enterprise Zone Activities

<u>Refunds Processed</u>	<u>Total Amount Refunded</u>	<u>Value of Equipment Purchased</u>	<u>Value of Building Materials</u>	<u>Jobs Tax Credit</u>	<u>Monthly Credit</u>
5	\$7,255	\$77,283	\$66,957	1	\$1,600



- The ED office administers the Enterprise Zone program, submitting quarterly activity reports to the Board of County Commissioners, Vero Beach City Council, and the Governor’s Office.
- The ED office hosted an **Enterprise Zone and Tax Benefits Workshop**, detailing each of the refund and credit programs available to businesses located in the Zone. Bankers, accountants and anyone who has clients located in the Enterprise Zone, are encouraged to call the Chamber for more information.
- Eric Menger, Director of the Vero Beach Municipal Airport, was welcomed as the newest member of the Enterprise Zone Development Agency Advisory Board.
- Provided information to 34 individuals, business owners and tax consultants regarding Enterprise Zone benefits, location

- The ED office coordinated the **2011 Industry Appreciation Awards** luncheon, with 200 attendees and 22 awards presented.
- Developed and delivered a Proclamation to the Board of County Commissioners recognizing Industry Appreciation Week in Indian River County
- Encouraged and assisted NetBoss Technologies in their successful application for the **Governor's Business Diversification Award-Newcomer's Award**. The company was one of 6 firms recognized from Florida's Research Coast.



*Parker Hammifin – 2011 Manufacturer of the Year*



*Jim Odom (center), CEO of NetBoss, with Gray Swoop, President of Enterprise FL, and Lt. Gov. Carroll*

- Monitored and provided updates on the county's designation as a Small Business Administration (SBA) **HUB-Zone**. A HUBZone is a Historically Underutilized Business zone, providing local companies priority consideration when bidding on federal contracts. Due to the new Census counts, one Census Tract in Gifford is designated as a HUBZone rather than the entire county.
- Participated in four county meetings with Gifford community leaders discussing a change to the allowable uses within the **West Gifford** commercial and industrial area, proposing to prohibit uses with the most adverse impacts. The current uses allowed and under question include cement batch plants, rock crushing, junk and salvage yards. The area is located between 43<sup>rd</sup> Ave and 58<sup>th</sup> Ave, north of 41<sup>st</sup> Street.



*Gov. Scott (l) with Helene Caseltine and Richard Stetson, President of Workforce Solutions*

- Partners in Florida's Research Coast EDC were invited to meet with Governor Scott during his visit to the Workforce Solutions office.
- Hosted the State of the Region event with 170 participants. The event concluded with several company executives offering a 60-second "elevator speech" summarizing their

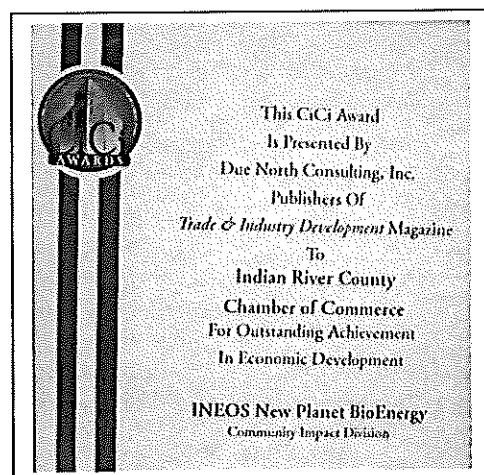
businesses, including CEOs from Vero Beach-based eMindful and AZZLY. The event provided a platform for future networking opportunities among the invited CEOs.

- The organization contracted with a local firm to produce a 6-minute promotional video. It includes interviews with key industry leaders, and highlights the attributes of the region for business attraction. The video is on the RCEDC website and partner websites.
- RCEDC partners were invited panelists in the 2011 Business Summit in Port St. Lucie; over 250 business leaders from throughout the region attended.
- EDOs from each county were invited to present business location information to a group of life science practitioners, hosted by the Mann Research Institute

## Communication and Public Relations

- INEOS New Planet BioEnergy Center was recognized for a **CiCi Award** (Corporate Investment and Community Impact) in the March/April edition of *Trade & Industry* magazine, a national publication. The program recognizes corporate locations and investments with a focus on the company investing in the community and the economic developers responsible for securing that investment. The project represents a \$100+ million capital investment; the ED office began working with the company in Spring of 2008.
- The revised Indian River County **promotional thumb drives** are now in circulation, distributed to prospective relocating firms, site location consultants, and local CEOs and plant managers to share with their peers and vendors.
- In a partnership with **Sun Aviation**, our promotional economic development exhibit is on display in the company's main lobby for visiting private jet owners and charter pilots.
- Provided information to *Florida Trend* magazine for its annual "FL Round-Up On Economic Development" segment
- Placed print ads in nationally distributed publications:
  - *Expansion Solutions* for aviation-focused edition, along with advertorial; supplied publication's CEO with our promotional thumb drives to distribute at the National Business Aviation Association trade show on our behalf
  - *Global Corporate Exansions*, annual focus
  - *Business Xpansion Journal* - FL focus, aerospace
- Conducted presentations to three local governments on EDD accomplishments: City of Vero Beach, City of Fellsmere, and Board of County Commissioners
- Spoke to the following organizations, explaining economic development programs, accomplishments, and incentives:
 

◦ Indian River Taxpayers Association	◦ Insurance Council of Indian River County
◦ Insurance Advisors of Indian River County	◦ Teen Leadership class at IRSC
◦ Rotary Club	◦ Leadership-Indian River
◦ Treasure Coast Builders Association	◦ Republican Men's Club



- Distributed 12 media releases to local media outlets and *FL Trend* announcing new/expanding businesses, events, special recognitions, and cost-of-living results
- Weekly guest on WTTB “Morning Magazine” radio show, promoting upcoming events, existing programs, and legislative priorities
- Monthly guest on TV-10 with Marcia Littlejohn, promoting upcoming events, existing programs
- Conducted three ACCRA Cost-of-Living surveys, with assistance from volunteers; distributed media releases announcing survey results

*Top investors in the Chamber’s Economic Leadership Alliance program, for the period 10/1/2010 – 9/30/2011, include:*

*Diamond Partners (\$2,500+)*

AT&T Florida\*  
 Florida Power & Light\*  
 Scripps Treasure Coast  
 Newspapers

*Platinum Partners (\$1,500)*

Donadio & Associates  
 Architects\*  
 Piper Aircraft, Inc.  
 Seacoast National Bank  
 Treasure Coast Refuse Corp./  
 Republic Service of Indian  
 River\*

*Gold Partners (\$1,200)*

Ameritrend Homes, Inc.

*Silver Partners (\$1,000)*

Marine Bank & Trust Company  
 Northern Trust  
 Richard K. Davis Construction

*\*As of 12/2011, investment levels from noted firms have increased*

***We thank all of our investors!***