

Wright County Economic Development February 2009
Around the County

If I ignore what has been happening on the national scale and avoid a lot of the negative news, this past month has been filled with good news and strong possibilities.

To begin, our annual meeting held on January 16th in Montrose was a dynamic event where we acknowledged and celebrated successful companies and individuals in Wright County. The entrepreneur of the year award went to Acoustigreen, which is a start-up company with 14 employees and over \$1 million in sales of environmentally, LEED certified ceiling and wall tiles with great promise for expansion. The High-Economic Vitality Business of the year award went to Sil-Pro, an implantable silicone device manufacturer that has close to 100 employees and has strong promise of future growth. Both of these companies are very exciting to talk about and are only some of several companies that were considered for these awards. Read more about them in our February newsletter, which can be found online at: www.wrightpartnership.org.

Toby madden of the Federal Reserve Bank was the featured speaker at our annual meeting. He said that the Wright County group was the most optimistic group of business people he had spoken to in the month leading up to that event. This is probably a result of the diversity of businesses that we have in Wright County and should bode well for a quicker recovery for Wright County.

Meanwhile, I am working with a couple of exciting businesses that will move into Wright County. One of them is a biomass electric conversion project that could create 100 construction jobs and 20 permanent well-paid sustainable jobs.

The other company that I am working with is a high-tech company that is building the latest family of security devices for the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Navy. This company is in the early stages of development, but is expecting a large order of their devices from the U.S. State Department soon. We are working to help them secure funding that they need to ramp up to fill the strong demand that is inherent in the need for the government and corporations to build a stronger defense against the threat of terrorism. Once we get them operating in Wright County they will have about 12 employees. The promise is that they will double in size every year for the next five years.

We have a full slate of events coming up this year with a number of exciting topics. Please pay attention to the advertising for these events as they are promoted. There should be something of interest to everybody. This information is also online at our website www.wrightpartnership.org. If you wish to be on our e-mail list to be notified about upcoming events and when the newsletter comes out, please click the contact us button on our website and let us know.

**Around the County,
Noel LaBine**