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union county
economic development**

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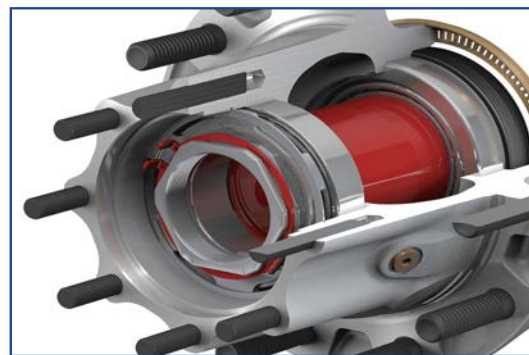


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Retail recruitment begins

There are many critical components which create the special livability that Union County possesses. As the population has grown exponentially over the past decades, retail locations have followed; however, the level of development in some areas has not kept pace with the levels of disposable income. Although restaurants and shops have materialized, they do not provide the diversity that is being demanded by residents.

Some areas of Union County have seen the diversification of retail develop. Major retailers such as Target have placed several locations in the county. The traditional mix of restaurants and retail space provided in these big box developments have generated a substantial tax base, demonstrating that retail brings much more than just conveniences to the community.

Poplin Place, home to retailers such as Target, PetSmart and others, is complemented by the mixed use of office, medical and restaurants located across Highway 74 in "The Park at Monroe" shopping center." The Park at Monroe is a truly unique concept, blending medical offices and its anchor tenant, the 100,000 square foot Novant Medical Center, along with its nearly 52,000 square feet of retail space for tenants like Olive Garden and Moe's Southwest Grill.

"Sun Valley Commons," developed in the Town of Indian Trail, provides Union County residents with a state-of-the-art cinema known as Stone Theater's Sun Valley 14. The theater is accompanied by shops and restaurants, such as Hickory Tavern and SweetFrog. These retailers have seized the opportunity provided by the younger demographic from the surrounding area.

Retail has developed in small pockets such as the "Marvin Town Centre" at the corner of Rea Road and Tom Short Road near the Mecklenburg County line. With 10,000 square feet of space, the Marvin Town Centre offers a more desired retail mix with stores like Kohl's and Starbucks. Additional boutique retail is popping up in small complexes to serve the needs of the dense neighborhood development, allowing a better quality of life for the residents.

In May, a partnership was ratified between the City of Monroe and the Towns of Indian Trail, Wingate, Waxhaw and Stallings to establish a Retail Development Initiative and hire a dedicated Retail Specialist, focused on identifying and assembling land and available properties to market to the retail developers and brokerage representatives. This professional should be in place by the

summer of 2017 and will maintain the most current retail demographics and marketing materials for these five communities. The ultimate goal is to increase the diversity of the retail offerings and the quality of products sold within the County.

"We are truly excited about taking more control of our retail destiny," stated Monroe Mayor Bobby G. Kilgore. "Our community has continued to prosper, but our retail options need to grow. This Retail Specialist will sell all the partner communities and help provide more restaurants, hotels, and shops for everyone."

The new retail centers being targeted are "experience focused" and will continue to benefit the residents with closer amenities and entertainment options; moreover, Union County will realize an increase in its commercial tax base and sales tax revenue. ■



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Did You Know? Union County Achievements

#1 county for incoming investment in North Carolina and 39th nationally in 2015

#1 aerospace cluster in North Carolina

Top 5 Boeing supplier site in Southeast

Top 5 in aerospace recruitment, nationwide

Top 10 aerospace cluster in the Southeast

Top 3 county for agri-business in North Carolina

Top 10 "No-Brainer" location for manufacturing

Top 3 best workforces in North Carolina (small market)

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Completion of 4th spec building provides new space for manufacturers to locate

PROVIDING PRODUCT TO SUPPORT A STRONG PIPELINE OF PROJECTS



Traditionally, Union County has depended on the City of Monroe and other private developers over the years to ensure that there has been an ample supply of quality building inventory for companies to consider as they evaluate the community. However, as a result of the increase in business activity throughout the Southeast, the building inventory has dropped dramatically. The economic development effort in Union County has resulted in virtually every marketable building being sold or leased, leaving no option but to pitch greenfield sites to businesses considering the county as a potential location.

In the past, the City of Monroe has developed three shell buildings on a speculative basis. Each one of these buildings has been filled with international companies seeking a US headquarters location or manufacturing base. Greiner Bio-One, an Austrian-based company, purchased the first “spec” building for its medical products business and has expanded the structure three times and added a separate 95,000 square foot distribution warehouse on their campus. Swiss-based Record USA purchased the second “spec” building to house production of their automated entry systems used

The City of Monroe’s formula has been successful in bringing in substantial companies with high investment, job creation and high utility demands.

in airports and hospitals among other buildings. As a result of their relocation, the company has reached a market share as one of the top five in the U.S. Both of these companies started with buildings that were approximately 50,000 square feet. Most recently, the construction of a third, much larger spec building at 102,000 square feet in 2015 helped lure India-based Glenmark Pharmaceuticals to Union County. Glenmark marks the first Indian company in the county as well as a return to pharmaceutical manufacturing.

These examples show that the City of Monroe’s formula has been successful in bringing in substantial companies with high investment, job creation and

high utility demands. The economic development office anticipates that this will remain the case with the completion of Spec Building IV in June. Located on just over fourteen acres across Goldmine Road from Scott Safety in the Monroe Corporate Center, the building is an impressive 109,000 square feet with a clear height of 30 feet. The shell building is heavily structured much in the fashion of European manufacturing facilities, with the specific intent to draw in an international firm. Taking advantage of an expansion feature the construction team from Samet has incorporated into the building, this shell will have the ability to easily expand up to 160,000 square feet.

Today, the community is also seeking to establish additional development throughout the county. There is incredible demand for buildings varying from 25,000-40,000 square feet from Wingate and Fairview to Mineral Springs and Waxhaw. Union County understands the necessity of these buildings as both existing industries are seeking to continue growth here and new manufacturers considering the region will find an ideal location in the county when coupled with quality of life, the Union County Public School System and proximity to Charlotte. ■



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Monroe Expressway to transform Union County

NEW TRANSPORTATION ARTERY SCHEDULED TO OPEN NOVEMBER 2018

Late into 2018, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) anticipates that the first vehicles will be rolling down the long awaited Monroe Expressway, streamlining through-traffic across Union County. Previously stymied by lawsuits surrounding environmental concerns, this transformational road is expected to alleviate the high levels of traffic currently clogging U.S. Highway 74 from Stallings to the east side of Monroe and to open up access to Wingate, Marshville and beyond.

Beginning in Mecklenburg County near the interchange with I-485, the Expressway's path extends nearly 20 miles across Union County, terminating just shy of Marshville. With six full interchanges along the road and the two partial interchanges at each end, the road also features 37 bridges and 21 box culverts. The planned interchanges include two in Indian Trail (Indian Trail-Fairview Road

and Unionville-Indian Trail Road), three in Monroe (Rocky River Road, US Highway 601 and NC 200) and one just north of Wingate (Austin Chaney Road).

To offset the total estimated cost of \$731 million dollars, tolls will be issued for passage on the road. Users may opt to either receive a mailed bill for travelling the highway or take advantage of lower toll fees by using the NC Quick Pass transponder. The Quick Pass, which is interoperable with the E Z-Pass, the Peach Pass and the SunPass, will assess charges at an Electronic Collection Toll rate. Decisions regarding how many tolling segments and toll amounts are expected to be finalized by the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Turnpike Authority in the coming months before the Expressway is completed.

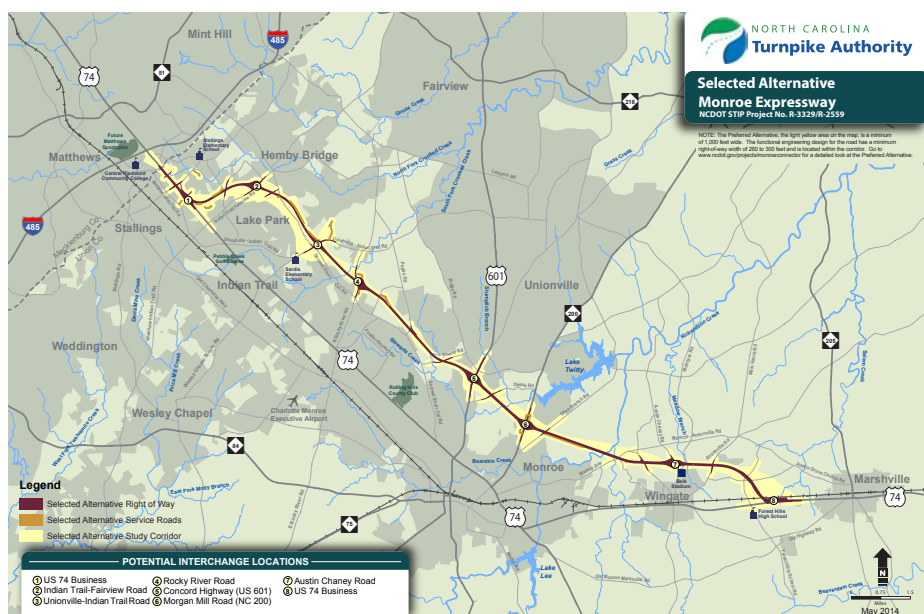
This bypass around the western development in Union County is intended to improve mobility and capacity in the

U.S. 74 corridor by allowing for high-speed regional travel while maintaining access to properties along the existing U.S. 74. With nearly 20% of traffic on the existing U.S. 74 in the form of commercial traffic and the addition of beach traffic from the north in the summer, the opening of the Expressway will allow this traffic to shift off the existing corridor. Business U.S. 74 can subsequently refocus on providing direct access to local retail, commercial and employment centers. From an economic development perspective, growth can begin to regenerate in these areas and the growth around the Expressway's interchanges provides new opportunities in distribution and logistics. Unique opportunities for which the County has not been able to capitalize on previously.

In preparation for this transformational roadway and the opportunities that will come with its arrival, the county and towns where interchanges are located

have been reviewing land use plans with the intent to guide development in a more cohesive fashion. So too is economic development, in partnership with South Piedmont Community College (SPCC), considering preparation for the effects of this development. The Monroe Expressway will provide a unique, never before seen opportunity to capitalize on recruiting distribution and other logistics projects to Union County. In order to develop the appropriate workforce for these new sectors, SPCC is analyzing the potential value in offering new educational tracks such as forklift training and supply chain management.

With over thirty years in the making to secure the construction of this road, leaders and citizens alike in Union County are anxious for the completion of the road and the unique opportunities development around the interchanges may provide.



NCDOT



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Existing industry program focuses on trouble-shooting manufacturers' challenges

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE ASSISTS MANUFACTURERS IN A WIDE ARRAY OF NEEDS

One of the primary functions of the Monroe-Union County Economic Development office is the retention of jobs and investment of existing manufacturers and other types of industries in Union County. This can be achieved in a myriad of ways — primarily through establishing healthy relationships, fostered by providing assistance with workforce development, municipal issues, grant research and writing, financial issues, B2B connections, utilities and much more. In short, it is the intent of the economic development office to act as a resource and assist with resolving problems to make it easier for local manufacturers to excel at what they do and to continue bringing jobs and investment to Union County.

During the course of the past several years, the economic development office's existing industry managers have been engaged in helping resolve a wide variety of challenges that can occur. Specific examples that existing industry managers have had a direct role in include some of the following cases:

NORTH CAROLINA CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE



CAREER READY TESTING

Sourcing talented and skilled workforce is a constant concern for many manufacturers, especially with the county unemployment rate sitting at a low 3.7% (April 2017, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis "FRED") and with the Southeast being a hotbed for relocation. In an effort to more efficiently identify competent workers, one Union County manufacturer reached out to the economic development office in the spring of this year to ask for assistance in implementing Career Ready Certification as a preference for potential hires. The Career Ready Certification was developed by ACT, Inc. to help employees gain skills

and to help employers make better decisions during the hiring process. The certification testing examines skill levels in applied mathematics, locating information and reading for information; skill levels are assessed on a one to ten point scale.

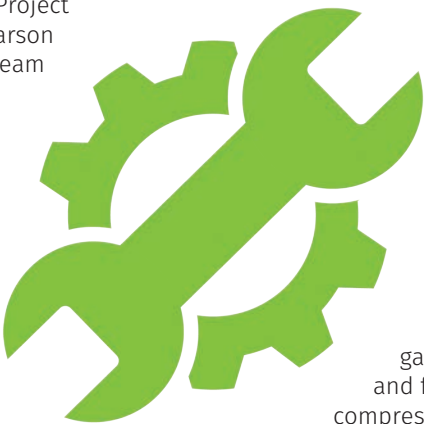
Existing Industry Project Manager Gretchen Carson connected with the team at South Piedmont Community College (SPCC) and arranged a meeting to review the basic format of the testing and the program with the company's human resources manager. After an insightful discussion, it was quickly decided to bring the management team to SPCC's campus to take the tests themselves in order to understand better the value of the tests and what skill levels and qualifications candidates with platinum, gold, silver and bronze certifications bring to the company. With the implementation of this testing as a preference for new hires, this local manufacturer is now able to quickly assess the best applicants to consider for their hiring process.

ENERGY KAIZEN

Energy efficiency is often an overlooked component for cost reduction in the operations of a manufacturing facility. However, implementing an energy kaizen, or a philosophy that focuses on continual improvement reducing wasted energy, can yield significant savings, impacting a company's bottom line. One such Union County manufacturer did just this over the course of the past few months, initiated with the assistance of Assistant Director Ron Mahle. After receiving a call requesting a resource to assist in energy efficiencies, Ron brought in Bill Hall, a local manufacturing expert familiar with running energy audits and kaizens. Under Bill's guidance, the company pulled together a team that included members from various departments throughout the facility as well as guests from ElectriCities of North Carolina and the City of Monroe's Energy Services department.

As part of this event, the company determined the following deliverables: reduce energy usage; confirm that the facility is on the best available

energy rates; develop a plan for energy saving projects and develop a plan for sustainability. The kaizen team, through a comprehensive analysis of energy consumption, identified three primary improvements — switching to LED lighting, using the



ElectriCities lighting rebate program to potentially recoup nearly \$20,000 for upgrading to more efficient lights; installing a furnace re-circulation system to pre-heat dies and raw ingots, thereby reducing natural gas consumption; and fixing leaks in the compressed air systems, which would enable a 30% reduction in usage. After running a cost-benefit analysis, the team determined that these steps, once implemented, could yield the company a total savings of just over 21% from their current energy expenses. Providing assistance such as this case is a key element of the existing industry program to support Union County manufacturers in order to allow them to make their products more efficiently and to continue growing in the community.

GRANTS FOR RECYCLING EQUIPMENT

Although there is an abundance of grant funding that can be accessed for research and development, manufacturers often face a challenge in finding any grant funding that supports the purchase of equipment. Rather, more often than not, companies must be willing to weigh the need of new equipment against cash flow of their business operations.

Carolina Wood Products, a pallet manufacturer founded in Union County south of Marshville, understands this scenario all too well, having been through it themselves. When recent regulations regarding pallet recycling changed, the company was forced to re-evaluate their business model. Rather than managing the recycling of used pallets themselves, customers of these goods began to seek out pallet manufacturers who could supply new pallets as well as reclaim and recycle the used pallets. In order to sustain

themselves and capitalize on potential new clients, it became evident that Carolina Wood Products would need to invest in recycling equipment.

Carolina Wood Products reached out to the economic development's existing industry team in an effort to find additional funding to secure the necessary equipment. After sifting through multiple sources, project managers identified a recycling grant through the North Carolina Division of Environmental Quality's Business Recycling Assistance Center. Working hand-in-hand with the company, the economic development office guided the pallet manufacturer through the grant application and submission process. A few short months later, the company received word of being awarded a \$30,000 grant which would enable the purchase of not only one, but two new critical pieces of recycling equipment. With the addition of the new equipment, Carolina Wood Products has been able to continue growing their business — something that otherwise may not have been possible without the grant funding. ■



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UNION COUNTY, NC

Population: 230,000+

Industry Assets:

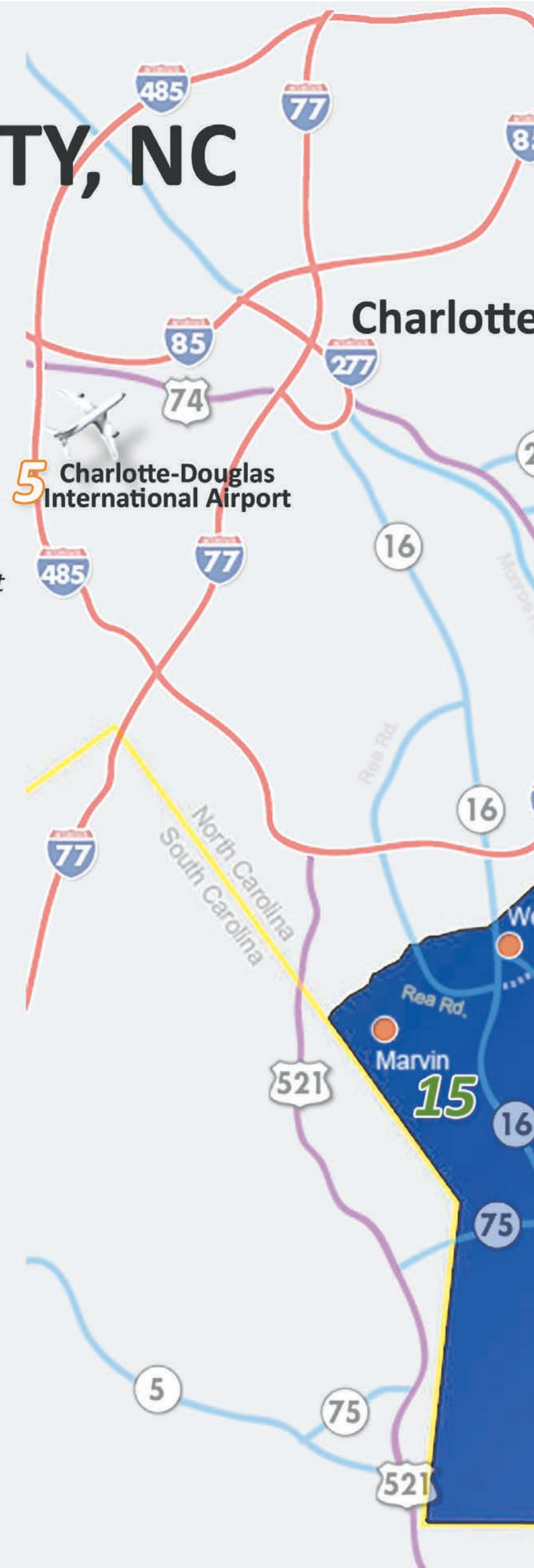
- 1a) South Piedmont Community College
- 1b) SPCC Tyson Center for Technology
- 2) Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport
- 3) Wingate University
- 4) Union County Ag Center
- 5) Charlotte-Douglas International Airport

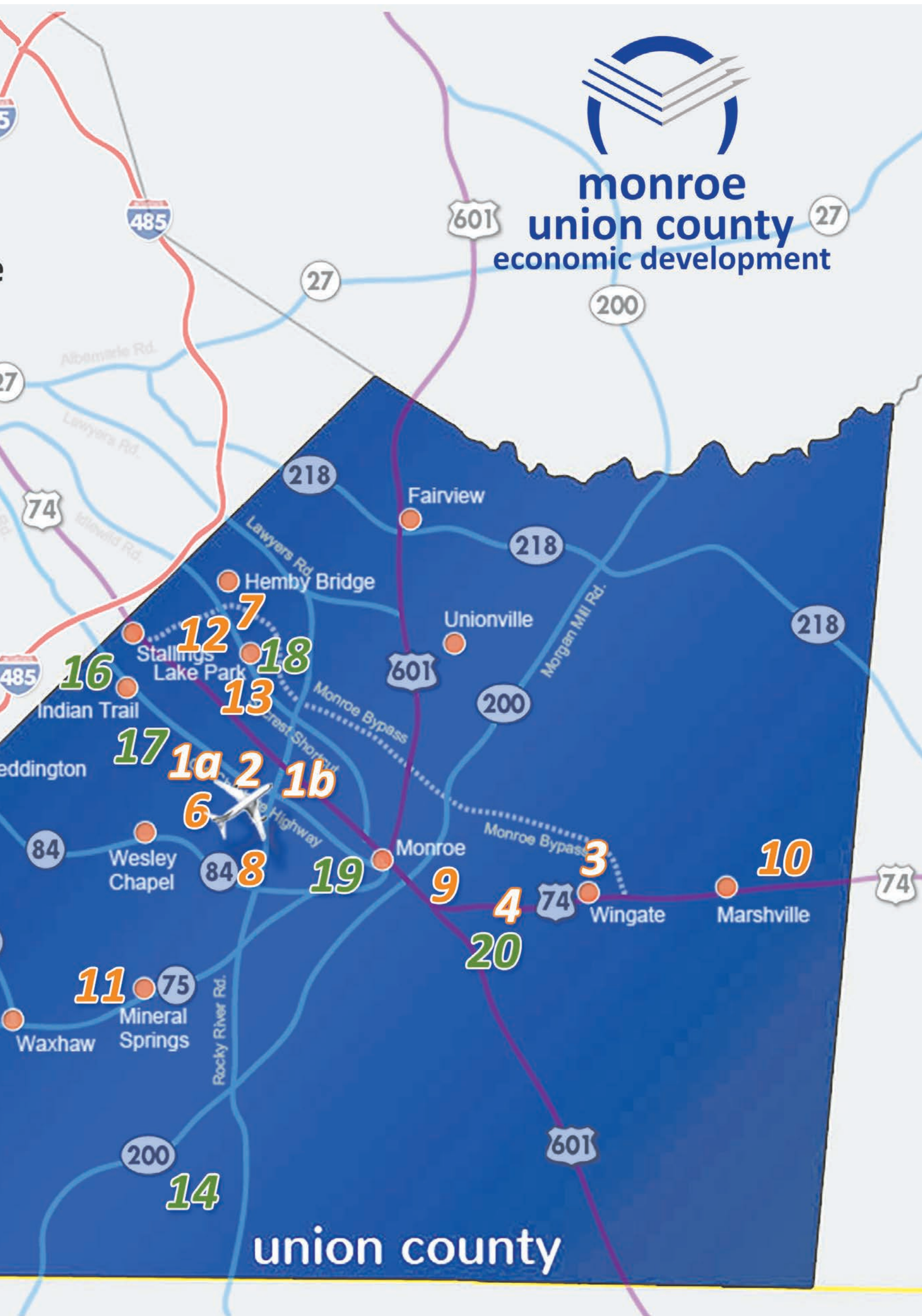
Industrial Parks / Areas:

- 6) Monroe Corporate Center
- 7) Indian Trail Industrial Park (future)
- 8) Goldmine Generations
- 9) Sutton Park
- 10) Marshville Rail Site
- 11) Shannon Farm Site
- 12) Old Hickory Park
- 13) Industrial Ventures I & II

Parks:

- 14) Cane Creek Park
- 15) Efird Park
- 16) Stallings Park
- 17) Chestnut Square Park
- 18) Crooked Creek Park
- 19) Monroe Aquatics & Fitness Center
- 20) Jesse Helms Park





Developing the workforce pipeline begins in secondary education



UNION COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS' ACADEMIES PROVIDE A LINK TO LOCAL MANUFACTURERS

As the gap between a skilled workforce and available manufacturing positions widens, communities must look long and hard at the best ways to engage in developing talent that can support local companies. In Union County, the secondary school system has done an excellent job in nurturing academies that focus on exposing high school students to pathways that can lead to employment in the manufacturing sector.

Developed through the Career and Technical Education within Union County Public Schools (UCPS), academy classes are frequently taught by instructors from various industries who have real-world, practical experience in their areas of focus. Students apply through a voluntary application process which requires acknowledgement and approval by a parent.

In recent years, UCPS has made a concentrated effort to build out programs specifically supporting the manufacturing sector. Some of these academies include an Aviation Academy and others, highlighted as follows.

AVIATION ACADEMY

The aviation academy will expose students to various aspects of aviation from avionics, to aerospace engineering through instruction that is project oriented and has a student focus. The avionics program offers electronics labs, aircraft visits and projects. State-of-the-art electronics training equipment will be utilized for this program. Avionics systems are an integral part of aircraft design and have vastly increased aircraft capability. The Aerospace Engineering program will allow students to explore the designing, building, testing and analyzing science behind the forces and physical properties of planes, rockets and unmanned vehicles.

ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY

The Engineering Technology Academy is organized around Union County manufacturing and engineering and contains essential ingredients. A challenging academic component with substantial hands on opportunities prepare students for success. The Engineering Technology Academy was

created to develop practical thinkers and problem solvers. It is a program for students who enjoy challenges and want to learn in art, mathematics, physics, and computer programming in a project-oriented, multidisciplinary way.

PROJECT LEAD THE WAY ENGINEERING

Project Lead The Way (PLTW) Engineering is more than just another high school engineering program. It is about applying engineering, science, math, and technology to solve complex, open-ended problems in a real-world context. Students focus on the process of defining and solving a problem, not on getting the "right" answer. They learn how to apply STEM knowledge, skills, and habits of mind to make the world a better place through innovation. PLTW students have said that PLTW Engineering influenced their post-secondary decisions and helped shape their future. Even for students who do not plan to pursue engineering after high school, the PLTW Engineering program provides opportunities to develop highly transferable skills in collaboration, communication, and critical thinking,

which are relevant for any coursework or career.

WELDING ACADEMY

Welding is a high-tech industry that is used in places all over the world. From ladders to aircraft carriers, from NASCAR to national defense, and from the laboratory to sales and repair, the varied welding industry impacts virtually every industry. Technology is creating more uses for welding in the workplace. For example, new ways are being developed to bond dissimilar materials and non-metallic materials, such as plastics, composites, and new alloys. Also, advances in laser beam and electron beam welding, new fluxes, and other new technologies and techniques all point to an increasing need for highly trained and skilled workers.

UCPS is continually examining the courses and academies offered, in order to provide content that best relates the knowledge and skill sets manufacturers need in their workforce. It is through unique and creative efforts such as these that pipeline for developing a local workforce can be fostered.



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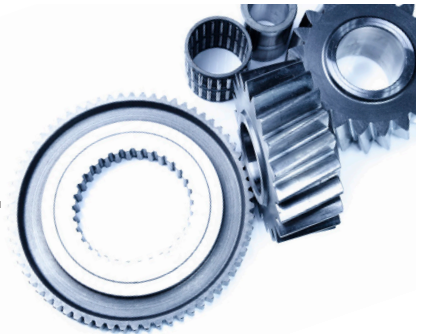
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MANUFACTURERS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A UNIQUE SUPERVISORY TRAINING PROGRAM

Monroe-Union County Economic Development has traditionally organized three to four seminars during the course of the calendar year to provide expertise on subject matter pertinent to the needs of existing industries. Previous topics have ranged from the impact of additive manufacturing technology to energy efficiencies in manufacturing facilities to onboarding and integrating a millennial workforce. The themes of the seminars are pulled directly from input provided by local manufacturers on what would be of most benefit to their operations.

In 2016, Monroe-Union County Economic Development launched an innovative program to provide manufacturers with a local resource to help develop the basic tool-kits of front line supervisors. Over a period of three months in the spring and the fall, six courses focusing on communication, trust and teamwork, resolving conflict, handling problem people and more were scheduled. By partnering with HPO Associates and supported by community sponsors such as Union Power Cooperative, the economic development office was able to offer the

classes at a significantly reduced cost.

Led by a facilitator familiar with manufacturing environments, course discussions often evolved into trouble-shooting real life issues participants were facing within their own teams. To drive home the material being presented, most of the sessions included break-out sessions, role-playing activities and group activities. Additionally, participants were encouraged at the end of each course to make note of two or three tools that they could immediately begin to implement within their current supervisory practices. An ancillary benefit to the courses has been an extended network of like-minded and like-challenged supervisors that participants can now connect with in the future.

As the program continued to attract more and more local participants, the economic development team considered ways in which to expand the program and provide more assistance to the manufacturers. The most natural trajectory for the program was to lay out an advanced series of supervisory courses,


including topics such as budgets and financial reports, employee motivation, personal productivity and performance management. The 2017 Spring Seminar series opened with opportunities to attend both Level I and Level II courses, held on the morning and afternoon of the same day.

By the conclusion of the spring courses in May of this year, the Supervisory Training Seminar Series program has witnessed the following participation profile:

• Participation of 29 Union County manufacturers
 • Approximately 160 different employees have participated in classes
 • 461 seats filled in four seminar programs
 • Supervisors ranging from a few months experience to 30+ year veterans

As the program looks to the future for the fall of 2017, the economic development team anticipates even more manufacturers joining as new participants and is considering a potential extension of the program by developing a more formal networking and benchmarking group. ■





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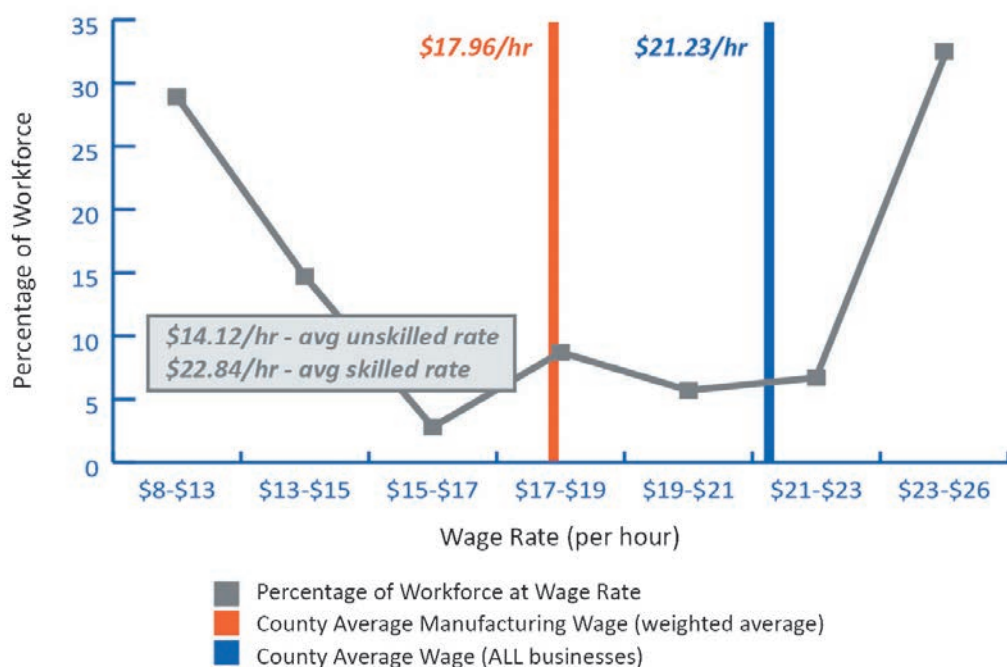



**Manufacturing
Awareness Week**

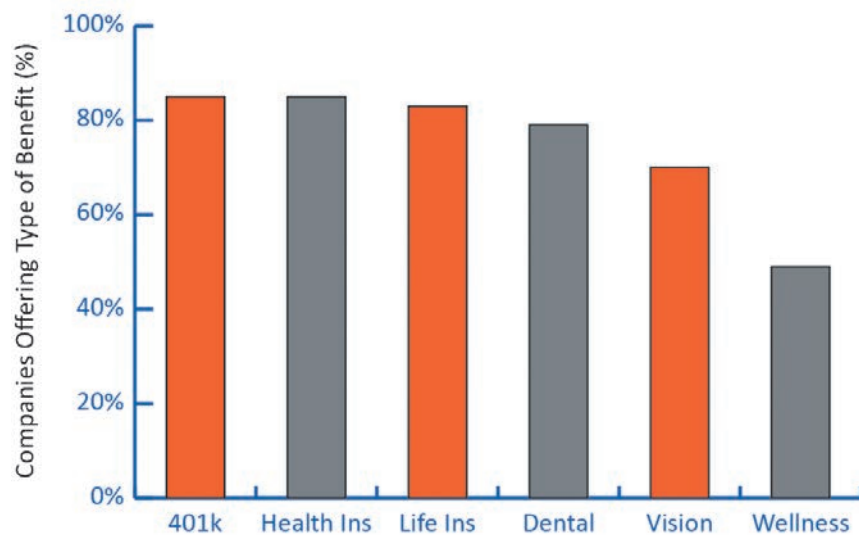
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Wage and benefit data supporting local manufacturers

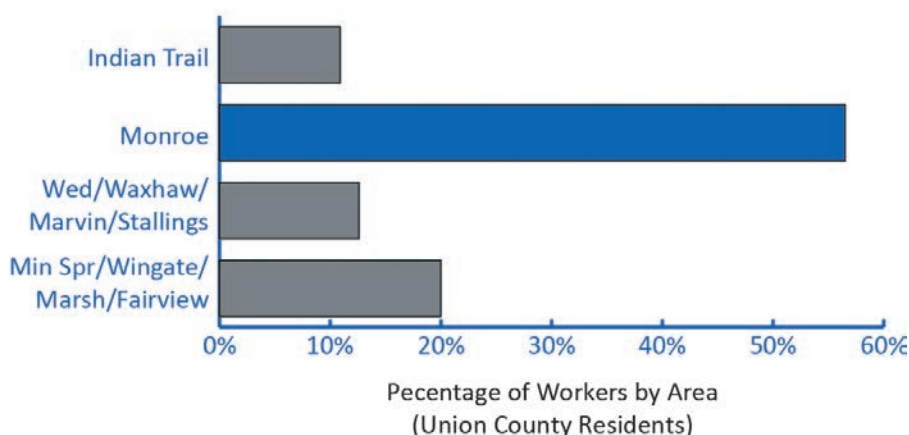
Average Hourly Workforce Wage Rates



Benefits Offered



Workforce by Union County Area



In 2015, the Monroe-Union County Economic Development office initiated a wage survey and labor shed study of Union County's existing industrial companies. This had been a request of the companies since emerging from the economic recession. Currently the economic development office is engaged in a third consecutive year of seeking manufacturers' participation in a wage and benefit survey. The results are quite revealing with respect to the changes of the average pay and the number of employees that reside within the county. In years past, the EDC staff had organized a previous wage survey, and the difference in the data between the two is dramatic.

As wages have increased and the unemployment rate has decreased, it has become imperative for companies to understand the landscape around them as they look to retain existing and recruit new talent. Comprehensive knowledge of not just the Charlotte region, but specifically Union County

allows these manufacturers to assess their strengths and weaknesses as they retain and hire staff.

The 2015 wage survey modestly examined hourly and salaried wages, both skilled and unskilled, as well as pay scales, shift differentials, wage increases, turnover rates and more. However, as unemployment continued to decline and talent became even more challenging to recruit, it was evident by 2016 that the survey needed to be expanded in order to yield better data for the manufacturers. Based on input from previous participants, the enhanced survey was expanded to include an analysis of job specific wage rates and benefits including health insurance coverage, 401k, vacation and sick time, paid holidays, and employee appreciation events. In particular, the job specific wage rates focused on those positions most commonly found in manufacturing — CNC operators and machinists, welders, forklift operators, industrial maintenance, and truck drivers (local, regional and over-the-road among others).

One final new component included in the 2016 survey was to analyze how many companies have awareness of or have used community tools available to them — NC Works' On-the-Job Training funds, incumbent worker grants, and training provided by the community college or a private vendor. Included in this segment, companies were asked to provide what training needs would be of the most benefit to their employees

and workforce development. The information yielded from this portion of the survey is instrumental in helping guide the economic development office in bringing appropriate assistance and developing useful content for seminars to support Union County manufacturers.

Over the course of these three years, the participation rate has been a testament to Union County manufacturers recognizing the value of this data and the understanding that all company specific information remains confidential to the economic development office. Engagement in 2016 increased to an astounding 33.6%, up from 26.7% in 2015, and is forecasted to be slightly higher in 2017. The participation rate of 2016 equates to 40.8% of the entire manufacturing workforce in Union County. Furthermore 43% of all participants shared data in both 2015 and 2016, establishing a basis for examining the results from a historical viewpoint.

The impact of the data from the surveys has clearly been felt by the manufacturers as shared by one local plant manager, "Our company found providing Monroe-Union EDC with data for the wage survey to be extremely valuable. It allowed us to see and adjust to competitive local manufacturing wages. This has shown significant improvement in turnover and better stabilized our work force." Other companies have been able to use this information as a benchmarking resource in the hiring of job-specific positions, determining wages for shift differentials and narrowing the results of the data to examine wage information of a targeted sector.

The 2017 results are expected to be ready in the coming weeks and will hopefully continue to provide invaluable information to Union County manufacturers as they compete to secure talent from a limited workforce in the Charlotte region.

"Our company found providing Monroe-Union EDC with data for the wage survey to be extremely valuable. It allowed us to see and adjust to competitive local manufacturing wages. This has shown significant improvement in turnover and better stabilized our work force."

Union County's future prosperity is found in 'balance'

The Union County tax base in the last few decades has been dominated by three sectors: residential, industrial/commercial and agriculture. Today, those sectors remain significant tax base elements, but the balance has become weighted toward residential. In fact, Union County's residential sector makes up 83% of the entire ad valorem tax base, while industrial/commercial properties represent 13% and agriculture represents 4%. The "textbook" ratio of residential to industrial/commercial is approximately 60/40. This ratio is needed due to the fact that residential consumes more than it contributes; the county needs the other segments to offset this loss from residential.

Although Union County appears to have progressed beyond the stage to bring our segments back into an ideal equilibrium, the County is unique. Union County's residential make-up is much more valuable than most counties in the United States. The average home value exceeds \$265,000 as of 2015, while the average home value in NC is \$176,800. The cost to serve this segment can be very expensive and for Union County, that break-even value of a home is \$327,000. As a result, the 83% of Union County's tax base consumes 93% of the revenues. For the fiscal year 2015, Union County lost \$14.4 million due to residential. This is significantly better than a majority of the counties in the country.

The value of the industrial/commercial properties generates a tremendous offset to the loss of residential. While only representing 13% of the tax base, industrial/commercial and retail properties consumed a mere 6% of the overall tax revenue. Therefore, this differential allowed Union County to generate a net profit of \$28.7 million for this segment.

Industrial/commercial zoned property is by far the most valuable land in any jurisdiction and should be treated as such and not as an afterthought or a place for a myriad of disconnected uses. The companies located within these zones benefit all the residents of any county by offsetting the residential loss. In 2015, this offset for Union County represented a subsidy of approximately \$477 for every

residence. In other words, if the homes had to cover their own costs, it would represent a tax increase of approximately 24.7% on all residential properties. Again, this is significantly better than a majority of the counties in the country.

Therefore, Union County is seeking to protect and improve this balance of the tax base. The county is aware it will never achieve the ideal ratio of 60% residential

to 40% industrial/commercial value in their tax base, but it must seek to increase the industrial/commercial percentage over the next 20 years.

Monroe-Union County Economic Development is spearheading an effort to educate citizens and encourage the municipalities and the county to work together to achieve the overall equilibrium for Union County. Essentially,

the goal is to preserve one acre of industrial/commercial property to offset the creation of every two acres of residential. This will be difficult to fully realize, but this target will ensure the health and prosperity that makes Union County one of the most desired places to reside and manufacture.

Wingate University provided the research that is the basis for this article.



The county is aware it will never achieve the ideal ratio of 60% residential to 40% industrial/commercial value in their tax base, but it must seek to increase the industrial/commercial percentage over the next 20 years.

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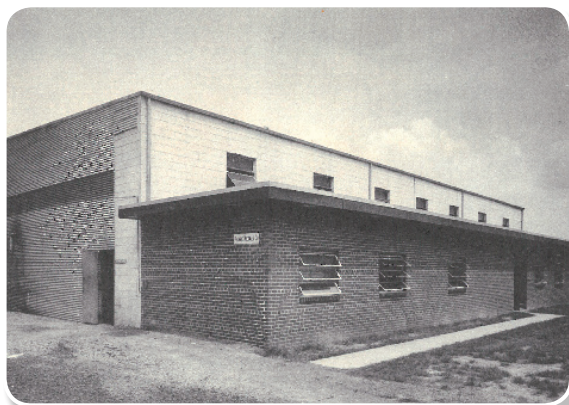
Union County vignettes

THE HISTORY AND MODERN INNOVATIONS OF LOCAL UNION COUNTY COMPANIES

Union County is blessed with many companies long-steeped in their history and tied to the community. Below are some outtakes of companies rich with stories to be told as well as insights to the innovative and modern products they manufacture today.



In 1957, James Nesbit founded Allvac Metals Company in Monroe, NC in response to an expanding market demand for high purity metals in a growing aerospace market. Nesbit developed vacuum induction melting technology which provides improved cleanliness of the alloys, a critical aspect necessary for the production of rotating jet engine components. With the growth of the nickel-based superalloy industry coupled with an increasing demand for premium titanium alloys, so continued the growth of Allvac over the course of the next 60 years. The company, once housed in a modest manufacturing building, has expanded to nine facilities spanning four states and one international location. Today, under the name of ATI Specialty Materials (Allegheny Technologies Incorporated), the company continues to expand its technologies as it adds powder metal production to its capabilities. Powder metal supports the growing 3D printing market and enables improvements in component design, fabrication, machining and weight reduction of critical components used in aerospace and other commercial applications.



In a small rented unit across the road from the current CEM headquarters in Stallings, NC, a chemist, an engineer and a mechanical engineer started CEM in 1978. Nearly 40 years later, the chemist is still present with the company — Michael J. Collins is the CEO and President of CEM and took the company from startup to private ownership in 2000. CEM's early steps were in the food industry, providing microwave systems that dramatically reduced test times for moisture detection in food samples. Expansion into environmental and wastewater testing and microwave-enhanced extraction soon followed. Having pioneered the field of microwave chemistry, CEM then expanded its horizons and technologies to include Nuclear Magnetic Resonance and advanced chemistry and established itself as a leading scientific technology company. By the late 1980s, CEM had grown to a \$15M company and went public in 1987. The '90s saw further growth and expansion into Europe, before the buyback in 2000. Today, CEM is the world's leading provider of microwave laboratory systems, with subsidiaries throughout Europe and Japan, and subsidiaries/distributors in about 60 countries.



Edwards Wood Products, established in 1969 by Carroll Edwards, in an abandoned chicken house as a small pallet manufacturing facility in Marshville, has grown over the years into one of the largest manufacturers of pallets and grade hardwood lumber in the southeast — manufacturing upwards of 120,000 pallets and over 2,500,000 board feet of grade hardwood lumber per week. Today, under the leadership of Jeff Edwards, President, Edwards Wood Products operates six companies in six locations and does business across the globe from Europe to Asia and beyond. In the daily process of manufacturing lumber, no part is wasted. The grade logs are cut into boards to be sold as grade lumber. The cores are used for pallet material, bark is sold as mulch for landscaping, chips for paper and sawdust fuels the company's kilns. In recent years, Edwards Wood Products has revitalized a dormant rail spur in order to capitalize on a new market for mats used by utility companies when new energy pipelines are being constructed. With over 650 employees, Edwards Wood Products operates six companies: a timber company to buy land, harvest and replant trees; sawmills and manufacturing facilities for pallet and lumber production; a trucking company and two separate mills for the production of cants and grade lumber.



UNION COUNTY AT A GLANCE

COMPANY ACHIEVEMENTS AND RECOGNITIONS

- **ATI** celebrates 60 years in Union County.
- **2 Hounds Design** named a finalist for Small Business of the Year by Business North Carolina and named by *Inc. Magazine* as one of the Inc. 5000 companies.
- **Consolidated Metco, Inc.** has been selected as one of the elite Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) suppliers to achieve the Masters of Quality Award for 2016. For the 27th year in a row!
- **Fisher Textiles** was selected for the 2017 Readers' Choice Top Awards for Grand Format Media category.
- **Greiner Bio-One** featured on the award-winning TV show "Worldwide Business with Kathy Ireland" in recognition for the company's dedication to safety and innovation.
- **Scott Safety** received *Popular Science's* "2016 Best of What's New — Security Category" for the innovative Scott Sight, the first in-mask, hands-free thermal imaging camera.
- **GMN Aerospace by GM Nameplate** received "Supplier of the Year" award from Boeing as well as the Boeing Performance Excellence Award. These are the 4th and 9th times respectively the company has been recognized by Boeing.
- **Victory Bolt & Specialty, Inc.** was ranked 13th in revenue of all the Woman Owned Businesses in the Charlotte Metro region and the only one listed in Union County. Additionally, the company received the 2016 Supplier of the Year award in recognition of outstanding support and customer service from Wesco Distribution.

UNION COUNTY AT A GLANCE

WHERE CAN YOU FIND UNION COUNTY PRODUCTS?

- Nearly all of the jockeys in the Kentucky Derby, Preakness and many other races around the world wear **Kroop's** goggles. Kroop's relocated to Indian Trail in 2015.



- **Devant Sports Towels** selected to produce the towels for the 2017 U.S. Open Championship
- **LogoDogz** printed 20,000 of the Carolina Panthers 2016 NFC championship t-shirts
- **WM Goodyear** produces hundreds of thousands of belts that start letters into the sortation process for the United States Postal Service facilities.
- **GM Nameplate**, primarily involved in supplying the automotive, appliance and personal care industries, has also manufactured the cover of Disney's Sleeping Beauty 2-Disc 50th Anniversary Platinum Blu-Ray and the Terminator Collection Special Edition.
- Glue produced by **LD Davis** is used by book-binding, packaging, photo collage, and game-board manufacturers.
- **Select Air Systems** has manufactured exhaust hoods for the concessions at Wrigley Field and Yankee Stadium

UNION COUNTY AT A GLANCE

COMMUNITY RECOGNITIONS

- **Waxhaw** leads the Charlotte region in growth at 44% from the 2010-2016 census data. (*Charlotte Observer*, May 2017)
- Niche ranked three Union County towns in their 2017 top 25 best places to live in North Carolina: **Village of Marvin** (6th), **Town of Waxhaw** (12th) and the **Town of Weddington** (16th). (April 2017)
- SmartAsset named the **Village of Marvin** as the 5th most friendly place for retirees in North Carolina. (March 2017)
- **Union County** was ranked as the most paycheck friendly place in North Carolina by SmartAsset. (March 2017)
- **Indian Trail** named as the third most affordable place to live in the US by SmartAsset. (July 2016)
- **Union County** ranked 9th in North Carolina in total investment by SmartAsset. (2016).
- The Towns of **Waxhaw** and **Stallings** were named the 5th and 9th safest cities in North Carolina by SafeWise. (April 2016)
- **Stallings** named as one of the top 50 best place to live in the US by *Money Magazine*. (August 2015)
- **Union County** ranked #1 in North Carolina for incoming investment and economic growth in an analysis by SmartAsset. (July 2015)
- NerdWallet named **Waxhaw** (1st), **Marvin** (2nd), **Stallings** (4th) and **Indian Trail** (5th) as some of the 17 best cities in North Carolina for young families. (February 2015)

TOP EDC Events for Union County's Businesses & Allies



Business and Industry
Appreciation Day

September 2017



Ally & Commercial Broker
Appreciation Event Economic

October 2017



Economic Summit and
Forecasting Event

February 2018



union county north carolina

Located to the southeast of Charlotte and adjacent to I-485, Union County is home to as much diversity in one County as there is in the state of North Carolina. The Gateway region of the County, nearest to Charlotte, is a well-developed area, optimally suited for corporate offices and distribution locations. The central portion of the county has developed a strong base in precision manufacturing, most notably in aerospace, and has the state's highest concentration of aerospace companies - 19 companies in a seven mile radius. Agriculture reigns supreme on the eastern side of the County, where production of soybeans, corn and broiler chickens ranks among the highest in North Carolina. These attributes, along with the County's strong workforce development pipeline from the public schools, South Piedmont Community College and Wingate University, combine to make Union County the ideal location for many businesses to call home.

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