



monroe union county economic development

*Adjacent to Charlotte USA, Union County
blends a unique quality of life with
Aerospace, Medical and Precision Manufacturing.
The EDC Team is growing the commercial and
industrial base throughout Union County.*



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Consistent focus on workforce development

Manufacturing growth translates to better wages, lower unemployment

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. The results were quite revealing with respect to the changes of the average pay and the number of employees that reside within the County. In the past, the EDC staff had gathered this information, and the change was dramatic.

Looking at wages in the early 2000's, companies were paying on average between \$9 and \$11 per hour for general manufacturing hourly jobs. Today, the hourly pay has increased to \$18.48 per hour. This increase is primarily due to the development of the aerospace cluster. The aerospace firms' demand for higher skilled workforce has challenged the other sectors to increase wages in order to remain competitive within our labor shed. Companies also increased their investment in technology, requiring our workers to develop more skills associated with this advancement in manufacturing processes. It is a simple formula: the higher the required skill, the higher the wages.

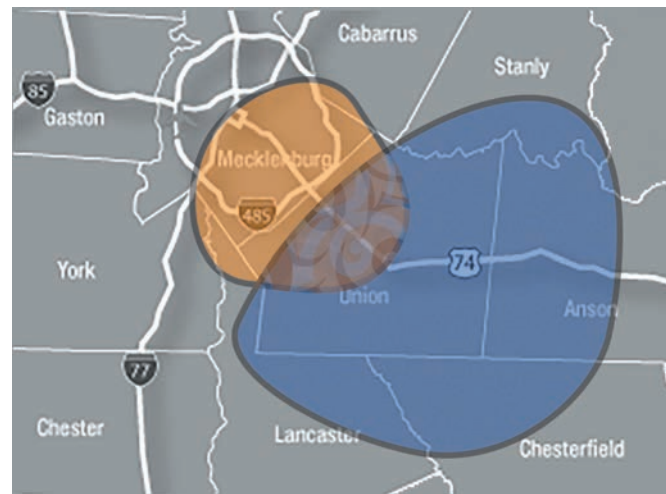
In other words, there is less demand

for physical strength and an inherent need for more intellectual capabilities; therefore, the companies increased wages to be commensurate with the new required skills. It is important not to leave a portion of the population behind, so while this demand for higher skills has increased, the pathway to obtain these skillsets are relatively easy given our ever-improving resources at South Piedmont Community College and special programs within the Union County Public Schools.

Looking at job numbers, just after September 11, 2001 our labor force was approximately 70,000 people with unemployment just under 6%. Today, the labor force exceeds 112,000 people – a 60% increase – while the current unemployment rate is holding at around 4.5% - nearly a 25% reduction from 2002. There is no coincidence this

Union County Labor Shed

Orange = Salaried labor force
Blue = Hourly labor force



is also the same time as the beginning of our aerospace initiative. MUCEDC has focused on luring and sustaining high-quality manufacturing jobs to Union County and it has worked.

The 4.3% (April 2016) unemployment rate is the lowest in the Charlotte Region, a measure that has been maintained for nearly 17 consecutive years. These jobs are local as well. 61% of all the employees at Union County

manufacturers live within the borders of Union County. This is high for any county, but considering the labor shed extends well into neighboring counties in North and South Carolina, it is a testament to the quality of life and the quality of job opportunities that are present in the community.

Union County has achieved incredible strides in the transformation of its local economy, especially with keeping its focus on commercial / manufacturing. This has been achieved while withstanding one of the highest growth rates of any county in the Southeast.

Union County is an incredible case study as the labor force's capabilities were strengthened and wages increased by 105%; at the same time the county continues to digest a dramatic inflow of people growing the labor force by 60% and maintain the lowest unemployment in the Charlotte Region for nearly two decades. It is a true testament to the need for further growth of the industrial, manufacturing and commercial companies throughout the County. The economic development office will seek to generate more buildings and industrially zoned land in the next several years so that they can continually enhance the county's economy. ■



**monroe
union county
economic development**

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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)

Lowest unemployment rate
in the Charlotte region for 17 consecutive years

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Apprenticeship 20/20 at South Piedmont Community College

Helping acquire new skills in Union County

In Union County, the concept of apprenticeships are taking root in this largely manufacturing-based community, whether on the crossroads of Airport Road or the corridors of US-74. Apprenticeships, continuing education and great salaries can be a road to well-paying careers which carry little to no educational debt. Simply put, apprenticeships are an opportunity for companies to identify high potential candidates and provide them on-the-job training and hands-on experience.

Begun in 2014, the Apprenticeship 20/20, or H.A.N.D.S. (Helping Acquire New Dynamic Skills) program at South Piedmont Community College (SPCC) is focused on building a workforce pipeline for Union County manufacturers. Companies pay the tuition of students while they take classes at SPCC and acquire relevant job skills provided by experienced and tenured trainers. Instead of accumulating tens of thousands of dollars in student debt, local high school graduates or adult workers are hired at companies that have registered apprenticeship programs

through the North Carolina Department of Commerce. These companies invest thousands of hours of work-based learning in Mechatronics or Industrial System training. At the completion of the four-year program, SPCC apprentices will have logged 8,000 hours of on-the-job training and 1,750 of classroom instruction, earning themselves an Associate's Degree and Journeyman Certificate with highly sought after skills that any company would need to produce high quality products.

Local Union County companies such as Greiner Bio-One and Vanguard Pai Lung are leading the way in Union County with the Apprenticeship 20/20 program. Greiner Bio-One is a global leader in the fields of biotechnology, blood and in-vitro diagnostics. The Apprenticeship program witnessed its first graduate, partnered with Greiner Bio-One, in the May 2016 commencement ceremony. Looking forward to the fall, several additional companies are in the process of completing their paperwork to join SPCC's apprenticeship program.



Advanced Manufacturing

region." She went on to say, "We have spoken with many companies that are looking to groom the next generation of CNC Machinists, Maintenance & Mold Technicians and Welding Fabricators."

SPCC's programs are designed to set a high standard of what an exceptional apprenticeship program can be to both employers and employees alike. Ms. Joyner-Talbot spends a significant amount of time speaking with parents, teachers, guidance counselors and business leaders about the importance of advanced manufacturing in Union County. "Many people do not understand the highly technical skills that have evolved in manufacturing and it is exciting to see the growth that is taking place locally."

The college, industry partners, and community leaders are delighted with the growing interest in this apprenticeship movement.

SPCC Executive Director of Apprenticeship, Jennifer Joyner-Talbot stated "Monroe-Union County Economic Development, SPCC, and industry partners all see great potential in a program like this to help close the skills gap that exists in the

SPCC continues to work closely with Monroe-Union County Economic Development, Union County Public Schools and other entities to develop a workforce pipeline, supporting Union County manufacturers. This is truly a joint effort that requires collaboration to address skills gaps and employment opportunities for Union County citizens.



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Union County sets its course for 2016 and beyond with new Economic Development Work Plan

In 2013, Union County and the City of Monroe decided to join their economic development efforts in an initiative that has been an overwhelming success. There were several main underpinnings to the accomplishments; from the support of the elected officials and leadership to the trust of our communities to accept the new organization in its county-wide effort. One of the most significant reasons for the success was the development and implementation of the Economic Development Work Plan.

The 2013-2015 Work Plan generated \$355 million and 1,152 jobs that had an average wage exceeding \$54,000 annually. The unemployment dropped over 40% in this same time period. This activity generated a return on investment of approximately 125% for the taxpayers of Union County before one accounts for the over \$60 million in new payroll per year.

"Being a single organization representing all of Union County afforded us chances to win projects that would have previously bypassed our communities. Therefore, our results doubled our goals," said Chris Platé, Executive Director of Monroe-Union County Economic Development. "Our economic development team worked very hard to bring development to every part of Union County. We are so proud of the accomplishments and opportunities provided to our residents for many years to come."

In 2016, the Union County Commissioners approved the new Work Plan detailing economic development activities through 2018. While there were many components carried forward from the previous plan, modifications were made to accommodate for changes within Union County or changes that are on the horizon.

The four pillars of the plan that guide the recruitment efforts are: 1) precision manufacturing, 2) agri-business, 3) logistics operations, and 4) commercial development. The targeted industries within the plan were revised to account for changes in the economy and areas

that had not yielded the desired amount of project activity. Agri-business was the most improved target, moving from farm implements to more high-tech support equipment for the large poultry farming sector in Union County. The aim is more toward software developers and other small device manufacturers prevalent within the growers' houses.

Aerospace is still Union County's most significant industry cluster. It maintains a strong competitive advantage over most other communities in the Carolinas with its developed concentration of companies and the strength of the available and stable pipeline of skilled employees.

This cluster has also generated a diversification of the overall industrial base to now include pharmaceutical and IT. At the forefront of innovation, the aerospace cluster will continue to evolve and expand into emerging product sectors. A prime example is ATI Special Materials, the County's largest aerospace company. They are now producing powdered material for the



ATI Specialty Materials \$70 million announcement at the Paris Air Show 2015. From left to right: Chris Platé, MUCEDC Director; Sec. John Skvarla, NC DOC; Richard Harshman, ATI CEO; Hunter Dalton, MUCEDC Chairman

additive manufacturing processes that will go far beyond aerospace.

Office development is also an essential component of the Work Plan and its success. Union County has been a mecca for high-end manufacturing but has not taken full advantage of its location within the Charlotte Region for other investments. With the developed residential density and renowned school system, the County has all the ingredients for the growth of office

parks along its Western boundary, otherwise referred to as the Gateway. Office development allows for further diversification of the local economy and further insulation to downturns in the other areas. It is this constant focus on diversification of the employment base that has allowed Union County to retain the lowest unemployment within the Charlotte Region for 17 consecutive years.

Finally, with the construction of the Monroe Expressway (US-74 By-Pass), new territory is open for development; these areas are being protected for industrial and commercial growth by the local governments. It is here along the Expressway that Union County will target the development of a Logistics cluster. This is another area of the economic picture that has not been cultivated due to the lack of decent large transportation routes through the County. Hopefully, by 2018, this roadway will be complete, and the connections between Charlotte and the coastal ports will be linked, allowing Union County to capitalize on this asset.

Union County has seen tremendous success in its economic development efforts since merging operations in 2013. Now they are planning for the next decade of growth and managing the local economy to provide the highest and best opportunities for its citizens. The specifics of this Work Plan will guide Union County to new achievements in recruiting and retaining jobs and investments in all four areas of focus.

precision mfg

manufacturing is still the cornerstone of the local economy for the county. It represents a significant portion of our workforce and is responsible for the significant increase in the overall earnings our citizens have enjoyed over the last decade. Prospects from this area remain the primary targets for new investment for the next few years.

agri-business

agri-business is a critical component of Union County's economic fabric. It literally touches every corner of the county. The county ranks as one of the top agriculture areas not only in NC, but the entire United States. Union County is also blessed with a huge basket of timber for processing and the NC's largest equine population.

logistics allows for the capitalization of Union County's location and abilities in the movement of materials, information, and processed goods to the world marketplace. Capacities in all utilities, the future Expressway to I-485 and an international executive airport provide strong advantages over the Regional competition.

logistics

commercial is based in the location of the county and its proximity to assets throughout the South, creating a demand for this non-traditional economic development activity. Union County is adjacent to I-485, providing many opportunities to develop office parks, entertainment areas and a stronger retail presence in the Region.

commercial

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Using art to define targeted industry

Union County's economic development team recently commissioned a local artist, Bill Colt, to depict graphically the four areas of focus for the county-wide Economic Development Work Plan. These artworks reside prominently in the EDC's new office space located at South Piedmont Community College's technology campus in Monroe. The paintings are representative of Precision Manufacturing, Logistics, Commercial Development and Agri-Business. Union County maintains a strong competitive advantage for companies within these targeted areas and it is now a very dramatic statement to all clients who visit the Monroe-Union County Economic Development offices.





Participants from the Spring 2016 supervisory training seminars.

Existing industry program serves company needs through seminars

Manufacturers take advantage of a unique supervisory training program

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, 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 year and a half, it became evident from existing industry meetings that there was a strong need for training in soft skills. A common theme revealed that many manufacturers employed members who excelled at their

position on a line; however, when it came time to promote to a supervisory role, these employees were often not equipped with the appropriate skills to oversee co-workers. Training in communications skills, collaborating with a team, trust and other non-tangible skills would all be of great benefit.

To fill this vacuum in supervisory training, the Economic Development office arranged for a series of Supervisory Training Seminars. Six courses were scheduled and offered to all Union County

manufacturers over the course of three months — two courses in March, April and May 2016. In addition to communication, trust and teamwork, the seminars focus on training for resolving conflict and handling problem people. By partnering with HPO Associates, which has provided skills training to many manufacturers throughout the Charlotte Region, and with sponsorship from the Centralina Workforce Development Board and

Union Power Cooperative, the economic development office was afforded the ability to offer this Series to local industries at a significantly reduced cost.

“Union Power is proud to partner with Monroe-Union County Economic Development as a sponsor to benefit our industrial community,” stated Greg Andress, Executive Vice President and General Manager. “Our employees that attended the supervisory training seminars gained skills that will help the Cooperative strengthen our team to better serve our customers.”

Registration for the seminars opened in mid-February and before the close of the month, all slots for each of the six courses were filled. While participants had the option to register for courses in an à la carte fashion, over half of the participants elected to attend all six sessions. Twelve different manufacturers participated in the seminar series, ranging from small shops to larger industries and everything in between.

Following each course, the companies received a recap of the



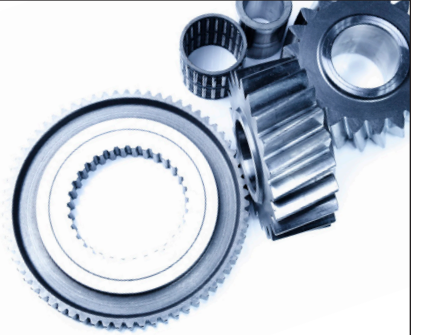


Supervisory Training participants engaging in a group activity during the Fundamentals of a High Performance Team seminar.

meeting, providing specific details on information covered in the course as well as results from a survey provided at the conclusion of each seminar. Over the duration of the series, the participants gave the seminars and trainer a 4.4 out of 5 rating and indicated a 27% increase in knowledge of topics from before to after the courses. As testament to the value of the series, one manager commented, "This has

proven to be a very worthwhile effort for our front line leadership team."

Due to this overwhelming response, the Economic Development office is pursuing a second series of the courses in the fall. The more manufacturers that participate in this program, the stronger our industries become and will continue to create jobs and invest in Union County.



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UNION COUNTY, NC

Population: 221,000+

Industry Assets:

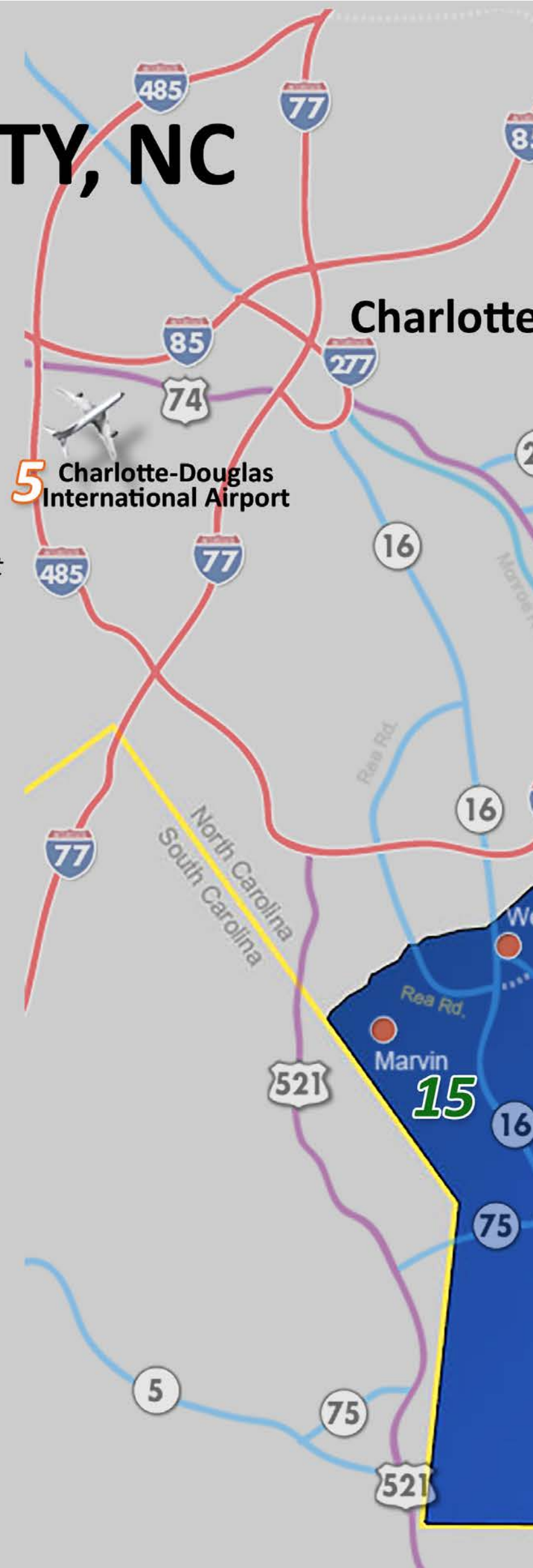
- 1) *South Piedmont Community College*
- 2) *Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport*
- 3) *Wingate University*
- 4) *Union County Ag Center*
- 5) *Charlotte-Douglas International Airport*

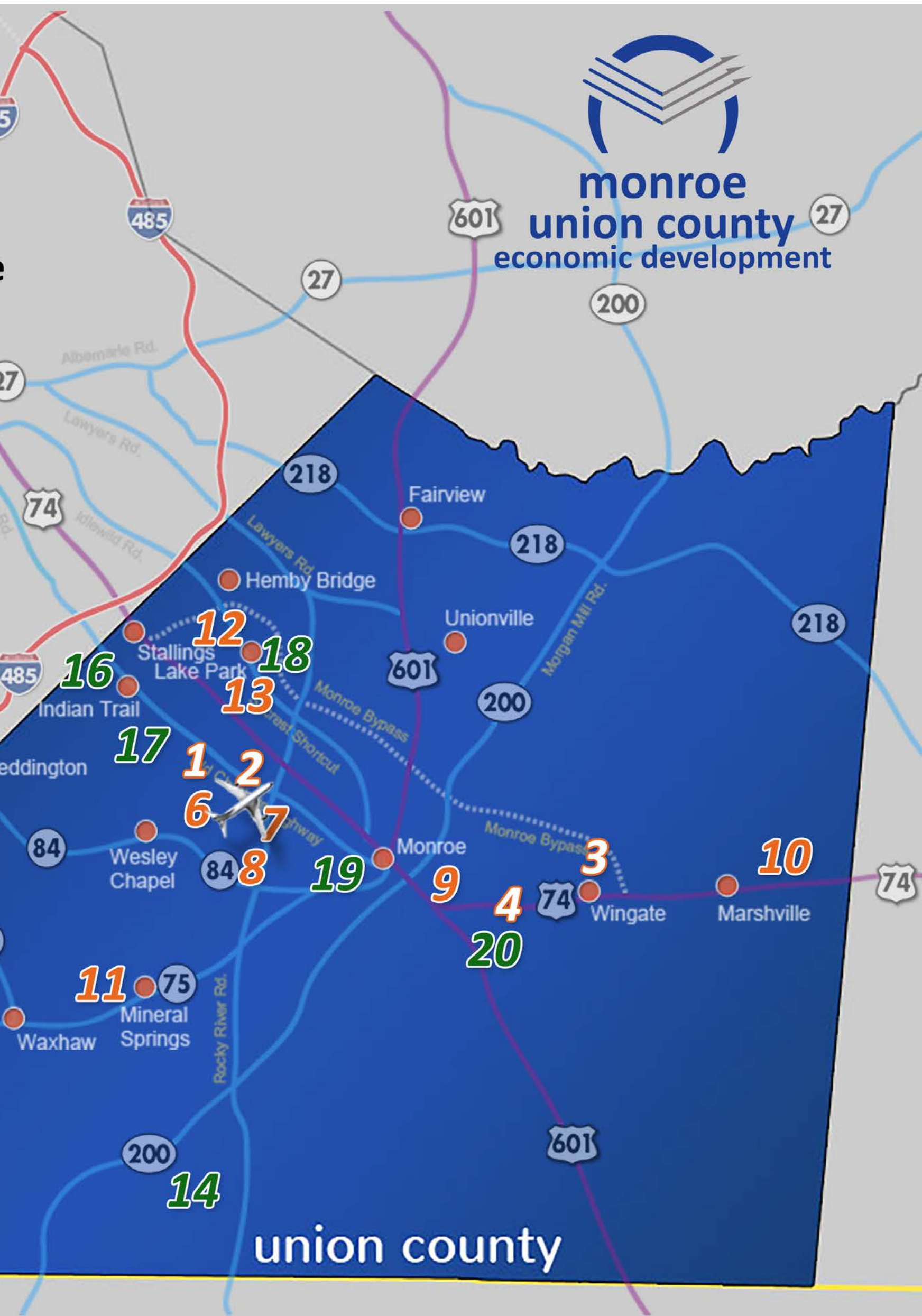
Industrial Parks / Areas:

- 6) *Monroe Corporate Center*
- 7) *AeroPointe Industrial Centre*
- 8) *Goldmine Generations*
- 9) *Sutton Park*
- 10) *Crossing 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*







U.S. Customs takes Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport to new heights

The City of Monroe has taken its airport, the Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport, to a new level of capability by becoming a gateway for international traffic. In 2015, the City established

a US Customs and Border Protection operation and constructed a terminal for processing international flights. This facility is truly one of a kind, standing apart from anything else in the

Carolinas. As a general aviation airport, one receives a unique level of service that is unsurpassed for travelers looking for the convenience and ease of use that is sometimes difficult to find at large commercial airports. The new International Terminal allows international travelers to fly directly into the Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport. There they are greeted by US Customs Officers who provide them with quick and convenient processing into the United States. Once cleared, the passengers are mere minutes away to their destination, be that in Union County, Ballantyne, Uptown Charlotte or beyond.

Built for approximately \$1.4 million, the International Terminal is 2,500 square feet and meets the extremely high level of federal security and safety standards. It is complete with secure offices for Customs and Border Patrol Officers, terminal lobby and processing areas. Located at the center of the airport and adjacent to the Horne Terminal and car parking, the facility is the centerpiece of this impressive airport. There are no other general aviation airports in North or South Carolina that possess the "user-fee" designation, meaning they are recognized by US Customs to accommodate international, private aircraft; the closest airports that are permitted to operate a similar service are the large commercial airports such as Charlotte-Douglas, Piedmont Triad, Raleigh-Durham, and Wilmington International.

Aircraft operators can schedule directly with US Customs Port of Charlotte for arrival time and processing requirements; concurrently, Customs officials will coordinate with the airport on arrival time and access to the airfield to support the flight and

passengers.

As a primary reliever for Charlotte-Douglas International Airport, the Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport is poised as an ideal alternative for the business executive that needs an expedient transfer from an aircraft to an automobile. The airport is a thirty-minute drive southeast of Uptown Charlotte, off US-74. The airfield supports virtually any size of corporate aircraft just shy of a 737 Business Jet on its 7,002-foot runway. Passengers can land, be processed and sitting at a meeting in Uptown in minutes.

"Offering so much to the Charlotte area's international business and travel, our new Customs facility at Charlotte-Monroe Executive allows international travelers to fly directly into the heart of the Charlotte region, process through in as little as ten minutes, and go directly to their meeting location," said Peter Cevallos, Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport Manager. "This boutique service is unique within the Carolinas."

Offering US Customs services has allowed the City of Monroe to utilize this International Terminal as a tool to market itself to international industries looking to relocate operations, companies needing access for their international customers and attract newly based aircraft to the Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport. With over 100 based aircraft and more than 57,000 annual aircraft operations, the airport boasts an economic impact of well over \$5M. As a result, it has become a fantastic economic development tool for the City to use in growing the commercial tax base, providing employment opportunities and improving Monroe's long-term fiscal stability.



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Union County EDC leverages NC State to aid industries

Bringing technical and process expertise to Union County manufacturers

North Carolina State University's Industry Expansion Solutions (IES) was founded in 1955. The first organization of its kind in the United States, its primary mission is to help North Carolina industry in all 100 NC counties grow and prosper.

IES helps improve, promote and connect industry to the world-class research and expertise of NC State, and to one another. It delivers solutions that result in lower costs, better products and higher efficiencies. Since 2000, IES-led North Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NCMEP) efforts have resulted in \$2.9 billion economic benefit to the State of North Carolina. IES expertise extends to diverse areas like process optimization; quality management; workplace health and safety; sustainability and energy; and innovation and growth strategies. It serves the manufacturing, healthcare, government and service sectors.

The face of Industry Expansion Solutions in Union County is Gene Beneduce, Regional Project Manager. Gene has over 30 years of manufacturing experience which

NC STATE Industry Expansion Solutions

provides him with a unique skill set when it comes to understanding the challenges and needs of our community manufacturers.

"It's a privilege for IES to help manufacturers in Monroe and Union County improve their processes and grow their businesses," states Beneduce. "We have worked together with Monroe-Union County Economic Development and South Piedmont Community College to jointly connect the best resources to the specific needs of manufacturers in Union County."

IES's work in Union County includes many recent projects at several local companies. Greiner Bio-One, a Monroe manufacturer of medical and laboratory plastic products, was introduced to IES through Mr. Todd Morris, Director of Corporate Training at South Piedmont Community College. Greiner Bio-One utilized IES

staff to conduct a plant-wide lean manufacturing overview that led to several plant floor rapid improvement events guided by 5-S principles. The result was improved safety, workflow, and productivity.

"The results of the 5-S training have been immediate," stated, Victor Phillips, Production Manager at Greiner Bio-One. "Employees throughout the plant are impressed with how well the process is working and cannot wait to implement it in their own work area."

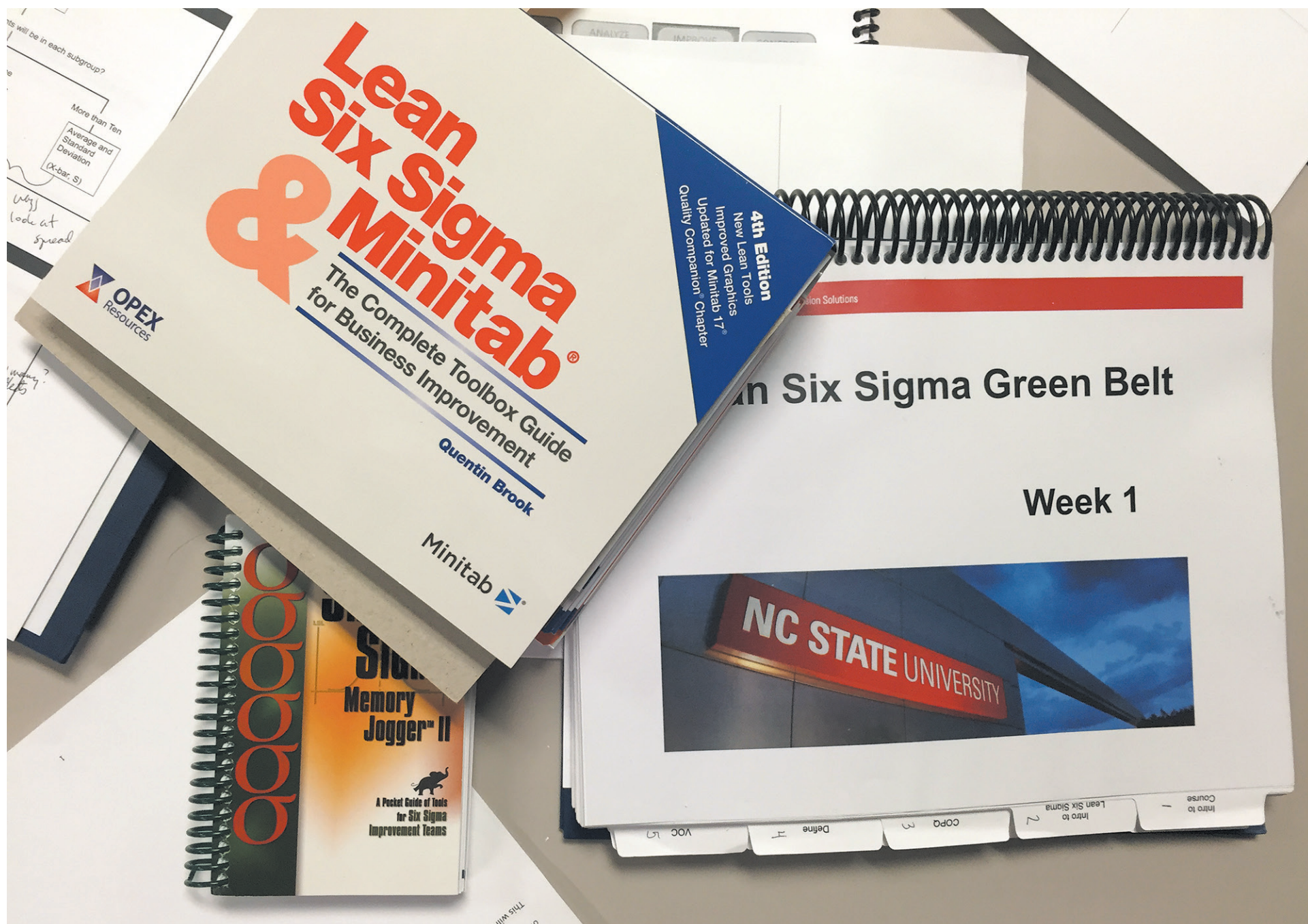
Darnel, a manufacturer of food packaging and recyclable tableware, is currently partnering with IES to bring Six Sigma Green Belt training to a group of managers and front-line supervisors. Six Sigma is an internationally recognized set of techniques and tools to bring about process improvement that reduces waste while decreasing variability and increasing efficiency. Darnel's management team began a

Lean Six Sigma training program in February this year. The team, made up of Operations, Sales and HR, recently completed the training program and testing required to apply for official Lean Six Sigma certification.

"Working with IES's Gene Beneduce and Bill Iacovelli, Darnel's team has started an aggressive project to reduce waste and bring measurable results to the company's bottom line," stated Robert Guy, Darnel's Human Resources Manager. "Bill's background in industry played a critical role as he described experiences in his past that relate to real world issues and ideas."

IES's Iacovelli will continue to work with the Darnel team over next few months to ensure they achieve their Six Sigma Green Belt certification. NC State's Industrial Expansion Solutions brings service and expertise that has tangible positive impacts on a company's bottom line.

Monroe-Union County EDC, through its relationships with organizations like IES in the Charlotte region, North Carolina and beyond, provide value and solutions for their local industries. ■





Special events supporting economic development activity

Capitalizing on events to enhance strategic partnerships

During the course of each year, the Monroe-Union County Economic Development office organizes and hosts a variety of events, each with a specific strategy towards furthering the mission of the organization's role to foster retention and recruitment of jobs and capital investment in Union County.

GROUNDHOG DAY ECONOMIC SUMMIT

For the past 6 years, as groundhogs foreshadow spring's arrival, the Monroe-Union County Economic Development office welcomes a panel of different economists to Union County who discuss local and regional concerns that impact our manufacturers and other industries. In 2016, the lunch banquet shifted slightly with presentations from Mark Sweeney of McCallum Sweeney Consultants, Chris Chung of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina and Mike Randle of Southern Business and Development. This particular panel provided insight not only on economic forecasts but also on the factors that are critical to a company when selecting a location in which to invest. This event provides local leaders with an opportunity to network while learning about external factors that can impact their businesses.

INDUSTRY APPRECIATION DAY

Each year in early September, the economic development office devotes a full day of activities towards

recognizing and thanking the industries in Union County for their continued commitment to jobs and capital investments as well as being strong community partners. The day kicks off with a barbeque lunch which is closely followed by a golf tournament, arranged in a captain's choice format. The golf outing provides a strategic opportunity to partner industry participants with other attendees who may be a valuable contact for the companies in attendance. To keep the interest level high, the tournament includes competitions for the longest drive,



the most accurate drive and the closest drive to the pin. Industry Appreciation Day winds down with a banquet dinner featuring a motivational speaker; speakers in years past have included Jerry Orr, former Director of the Charlotte Douglas International Airport, and Chris William, Executive Director and Moderator of the Charlotte Business Review. The highlight of the dinner arrives after the speaker with the announcement for the recipient of the Economic Development Ambassador Award. This award was begun in 1999 in order to recognize those individuals who

From left to right: Chris Platé, Monroe-Union County ED, with 2016 Groundhog Day presenters and moderator; Michael Randle, Southern Business and Development; Mark Sweeney, McCallum Sweeney; Christopher Chung, EDPNC, and Al Guarnieri, Parker Poe.

have assisted in the recruitment of industry or who have contributed to the overall business friendly environment in Union County. Industry Appreciation Day culminates with the announcement of the winners of the golf tournament and the tournament competitions.

SMOKIN' SHELLS ALLY AND BROKER EVENT

Since 2014, the EDC has held its Smokin' Shells ally and broker shotgun shoot-out event at Meadow Wood Farm in southern Union County. Arranged as a 13 station tournament, the event is intended to provide realtors and allies with a better understanding of property and buildings available in the county. Each station features a different listing and information on the site or building that participants are able learn about while advancing through the course. Throughout the course of the event, stronger relationships are built between the economic development office and the allies that are critical to retention and recruitment of our industries in Union County.



2015 Smokin' Shells participants

Union County is sparking with energy

Three strong energy suppliers provide county industries with choices

Union County is supported by three very stable and robust electric providers with modern systems to deliver quality electricity to our industries and commercial companies. The City of Monroe and Union Power Cooperative are managed locally, while Duke Energy is a significant energy player nationally. Regardless of serving a community, a region or a national footprint, the energy providers in Union County are world-class.



UNION POWER COOPERATIVE

Members are the focus of Union Power Cooperative's efforts to provide safe, reliable electricity and energy services with exceptional value. Headquartered in Monroe, North Carolina, the electric cooperative is the fifth largest private, not for profit, member-owned electric cooperative in the state providing electric service to over 72,000 member accounts in Union, Stanly, Mecklenburg, Cabarrus, and Rowan counties. With nearly 6,000 miles of line and 23 substations, Union Power is in the top five percent of the nation's largest cooperatives. Union Power has a system peak in excess of 350 megawatts and provides members with a reliable system rating of 99.9%.

STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITIES

Union Power enhances the life in the communities they serve by:

- Investing in public education, health and safety, energy efficiency, and renewable energy development.
- Supporting economic development initiatives through partnership with the Monroe-Union County Economic Development, NC Department of Commerce and local governments to assist with job development and provision of essential community services.
- Returning millions of dollars each year back to members through the retirement of capital credits – money that ultimately goes back into the communities served and enhances the local economies.

MEMBER SATISFACTION

Union Power is proud to have achieved consistently high marks from the nationally recognized American Consumer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) that is nearly ten points above the industry standard. Union Power takes a leadership role to improve the quality of life in communities they serve.



DUKE ENERGY IN UNION COUNTY

In Union County and across North Carolina, the Duke Energy economic development team helps power the state and its economy through significant business recruitment and retention initiatives. This includes the company's award-winning Site Readiness Program, which increases the awareness of high-quality industrial sites in the company's service areas.

In 2014, the 140-acre Shannon Farm Site located along Highway 75 in Mineral Springs was evaluated as a part of the Site Readiness Program. McCallum Sweeney Consulting concluded that the site had good potential for industries like light manufacturing, aerospace/aviation, auto parts manufacturing and some plastics manufacturing industries. It is the fourth site that Duke Energy has evaluated in Union County.

Duke Energy delivers value and efficiency to business customers of all sizes in North Carolina through programs like Small Business Energy Saver and Smart Energy in Offices.

Duke Energy is also investing in future clean energy generation in Union County as part of a heavy investment in solar energy in North Carolina. In May, Duke Energy received regulatory approval from the North Carolina Utilities Commission (NCUC) to construct a solar facility in Union County. The 60-megawatt Monroe Solar Facility on 2272 S. Rocky River Road near Monroe will be located on a 400-acre site.



CITY OF MONROE ENERGY SERVICES

Since January of 1900, the City of Monroe Energy Services Department has provided residents and industry in the city with reliable and affordable electricity, from small household loads to industrial requirements of up to 20,000 kilowatts or larger. Over the decades, as Monroe's residential and industrial population grew, especially after World War II, so did the electric system. Today, the City of Monroe serves over 10,800 customers through 6 electric substations, with annual peak demand of 140 Megawatts.

Monroe is one of 19 regional municipalities who make up the North Carolina Municipal Power Agency 1 (NCMPA1). This group of cities and towns banded together in the late 1970's to help finance the construction of Catawba Nuclear Station from which they purchase electricity at a wholesale rate.

Providing reliable power while maintaining the utmost safety for its employees and customers has been

a cornerstone of Monroe Energy Services from those first early days of operation over 116 years ago. Municipalities that achieve the highest marks in reliability, safety, training and system improvement are recognized by the American Public Power Association's Reliable Public Power (RP3) designation. Monroe has held this distinction since 2007 and is one of only 64 communities in the nation to achieve this accolade. The City of Monroe and Monroe Energy Services established the Monroe Corporate Center, a 500-acre Class A industrial campus located adjacent to the Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport in Monroe. To date, the Monroe Corporate Center is home to ten companies employing 1,500 people. Monroe Energy Services also funds a Speculative Building Program that has enabled the successful recruitment of companies like: Greiner Bio-One, Record USA, and Glenmark Pharmaceuticals. These companies represent a combined investment of more than \$75 million and the creation of 400 jobs. In the summer of 2016, Monroe will break ground on its fourth speculative building in the Monroe Corporate Center – a 108,000 square foot structure designed to accommodate advanced manufacturing.

Clearly, the initial investment by Monroe Energy Services continues to pay significant dividends in the form of capital investment, job creation for the City and new electric load on the system.



Retail now a target for Union County municipalities

Retail sites, like industrial and residential, are a critical component to development and the livability of Union County. 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 all the residents.

Some areas of Union County have seen the diversification of retail develop. Major retailers such as Target and the Gander Mountain Supercenter can be found at established shopping centers like "Poplin Place" in Monroe. While offering a mix of traditional restaurant and retail space, this development has generated a tax base worth \$40 million, demonstrating that retail brings much more than just conveniences to the community.

Poplin Place is complemented by the mixed use of office, medical and restaurants located across Highway 74 from Poplin Place 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 (the only Starbucks with the Reserved Clover Brewing in the Charlotte region). 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.

There is a movement afoot led by a partnership between the City of Monroe and the Town of Indian Trail to establish an Interlocal Agreement with other municipalities in Union County to hire a Retail Specialist, focused on identifying and assembling land to market to the retail developers and brokerage representatives. This professional will maintain the most current retail demographics and marketing materials for these 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."

As more of these retail centers continue to develop, the residents will benefit 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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Monroe Expressway will be a game changer

Union County is getting closer to experiencing one of the most dramatic changes to the community since I-485 connected US 74 to I-77 nearly two decades ago. The new toll road to the east of Charlotte will be the first interstate quality roadway in Union County. It will provide opportunities for the county to compete more effectively for logistics and larger-scale office parks. The Monroe Expressway, begun in May 2015, is being built at a very aggressive pace and could be open before the protected finish date in late 2018. This project will be a significant addition to Union County; the opportunities along the route for commercial growth are exceptional.

Certifications and accolades of Union County manufacturers



In 2016, American MTS became the first company in North Carolina to achieve the Electrical Apparatus Service Association (EASA) certification.



In the spring of 2015, Coca-Cola Bottling Consolidate Company Monroe facility achieved SHARP (Safety & Health Achievement Recognition Program) designation, the NC Department of Labor's safety award. Only 161 of 200,000 companies state-wide have earned this accolade.



Decore-ative Specialties celebrated 50 years in business in 2015. Additionally, Todd Shapiro, Vice-President of Eastern Operations in Monroe, received the Innovator of the Year Wooden Globe Award from the Woodworking Machinery Industry Association.



Goulston Technology received ISO 14001:2004 certification, recognizing the company's commitment to environmentally friendly business practices.



B+E Manufacturing, located in Indian Trail, received the 2015 Small Category Award for the NC Family Business Awards.



In 2015, Consolidated MetCo Monroe facility was awarded the 2014 Masters Quality Supplier from Daimler Trucks North America, the only location to receive this prestigious award 25 times.




The window division of Woodgrain Millwork, Windsor Windows, awarded the 2015 President's Safety Award. To achieve this award, all three window divisions, including the Monroe facility, demonstrated exceptional worker safety.




CEM's Liberty Blue Automated Microwave Peptide Synthesizer announced as the winner of the 2014 R&D 100 Award.



Fisher Textiles was selected as the 2015 Product of the Year Winner at the Specialty Graphic Imaging Association (SGIA) Expo.

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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 - 18 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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