



101 North Main Street
Room 102
Celina, OH 45822

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Have a Safe and Enjoyable Summer!



EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

Unemployment rate for Mercer County for the month of April 2013:

April, 2013.....	4.1%
March, 2013	4.6%
April, 2012.....	4.3%
Labor Force.....	24,400
Employment	23,400
Unemployment	1,000

Rates for surrounding counties:

Auglaize County	4.9%
Darke County	6.2%
Shelby County	5.8%
Van Wert County.....	6.6%

THE RLF PORTFOLIO OF MERCER COUNTY

Funds on Hand.....	\$292,000.00
Available Funds to Lend ..	\$222,000.00
Total # of Loans	32
Number of Jobs Created	1,422

If you know anyone interested in the RLF Program, please contact Mercer County Community Development at: 419.586.4209 or 419.586.2963

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Jerry Laffin, Chairman
Rick Muhlenkamp, Vice Chairman
John Bruns, Member

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Together, we can...

MORE POSITIVE SIGNS FROM AROUND THE AREA...

As you travel through Mercer County, you may start to notice several new areas of development throughout the region. Four businesses are either starting construction on new facilities or expanding their current ones.

Ferguson Enterprises, a wholesale distributor of plumbing supplies, pipes, valves, fittings, heating/cooling equipment, and waterworks, contracted Kelchner Excavating to start the earthwork of their new 350,000-square-foot distribution center on State Route 29 and Harris Road east of Celina.



To complete this project, several improvements will need to be made to the surrounding area of the site as the construction of the facility begins. These improvements totaling \$1.15 million include roadway, water, sewer, and gas line improvements.



Collaboration at the state and local levels will make the site improvements possible. A \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant from the Ohio Development Services Agency will help fund these improvements, along with a \$200,000 629 Grant and \$150,000 ODOT Grant. Ferguson will then invest \$15 million for the construction of the building, new equipment and machinery, and furniture. The facility will also create 70 permanent full-time jobs.

The earthwork for the site should be completed in early July 2013. The building is projected to be complete by March 2014 with operations starting in May 2014. Mercer County is proud to be chosen as the location of Ferguson's first distribution center in the entire Midwest!

"Winning Ferguson Enterprises to Ohio was a true partnership effort," said John Minor, President and Chief Investment Officer for JobsOhio. "Thanks to a team approach by the state, Mercer County and our network partners at the Dayton Development Coalition, another great company is locating in Ohio and bringing jobs to Ohioans."

HOMETOWN OPPORTUNITY UPDATE

POSITIVE SIGNS *CONTINUED*

Ergo Desktop broke ground and started development on their new facility located on Grand Lake Road. The company, which sells and manufactures ergonomic desktops, is currently located in the Galleria but originally started out of the garage of owners Dan and Kathy Sharkey.

After 10 years of successful business with clients like ESPN and Disney, Ergo Desktop purchased 1.5 acres of land to build a 20,000-square-foot facility for their expansion. They currently employ 18 employees but are looking to increase this amount with the expansion. They currently sell products directly to customers in most metropolitan areas in the U.S. and have customers in Canada and Australia.



J&M Manufacturing, a leading manufacturer of grain handling equipment, is getting ready to start on their 53,000-square-foot building expansion that will house their research and development department. J & M anticipates adding an additional five full-time positions over the next three years as a result of this project.



The Coldwater Machine Company is a local manufacturer of factory automation that is used to make parts for the Appliances, Automotive, Electrical Generation, Aerospace, Beverage and Health Care industries. Their services range from designing and building of complex machinery as well as making precision one-off build-to-print parts for large corporations. They are an engineering driven company with tremendous growth potential by way of their relationships in the global manufacturing industry. The Coldwater Machine Company recently started a nearly 30,000-square-foot expansion to their current facility on the north edge of Coldwater to support the growing activity in the designing and building of specialty factory automation cells.



Hometown Opportunity, the initiative started out of the Mercer County Community Development office to promote and support local community and business growth, has gained momentum since its launch in November 2012.

Jared Ebbing, Mercer County economic development director, has been collaborating with area businesses and schools and delivering this information to students and community members. He has attended job fairs at St. Marys Memorial High School, Ft. Loramie High School, and Wright State University Lake Campus, and he has talked with all senior high school students in Mercer County and most of Auglaize County.

The response has been encouraging as people are realizing and becoming more aware of the many possibilities in the area. More and more businesses are posting profiles and jobs on the site, and many more people are applying to these positions. There is also a growing community on social networks like Facebook (Hometown Opportunity) and Twitter (@HometownOpp).

Hometown Opportunity is thankful for the support from local businesses and communities. Both Mercer and Auglaize counties have put forth \$25,000 each for the continued development of the Hometown Opportunity concept. The Grand Lake Development Corporation also contributed \$10,000 to the initiative. Local businesses are beginning to donate funds as well, that will be placed with the Mercer County Civic Foundation, in the hopes that this initiative continues to grow for the benefit of our local businesses and the community as a whole



Stats to think about

Facebook 800+ likes
New Jobs posted 400+
Website Visits.....9,663+
Page Views.....40,000+

Many companies are expressing how quickly they're finding quality resumes for the jobs they're posting via this website and its Social Media tools.

SPRING BREAKFAST FORUM

Mark Barbash, chief operating officer of Finance Fund, spoke to 170 attendees—including approximately 80 area high school students—about the economic development and future growth of West Central Ohio at the Mercer County Community Development's Spring Breakfast Forum on March 26, 2013, at Romer's Banquet Facility in Celina.

Barbash explained how it is taking longer to come out of the latest recession than before. There are 76 million people retiring, but there are only 48 million people coming into the workforce. Barbash pointed out the increase in technology is changing manufacturing, service, and distribution, and that technology is going to continue to be a mainstay in Ohio. The new competition is focusing on regional collaboration.

West Central Ohio is the perfect place for a business because of work ethic, quality of schools, quality of life, and its central proximity to major cities like Dayton, Columbus, and Toledo, Barbash said. The best economic development strategy is to support the existing businesses, while education and training are the most important tools for a successful economy.

This event was made possible by our sponsors: The St. Henry Bank, Citizens National Bank, First Financial Bank, The Peoples Bank Co., Second National Bank, and Mercer Savings Bank.



MARK BARBASH FROM FINANCE FUND TALKS WITH ATTENDANTS OF THE SPRING BREAKFAST FORUM ABOUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF WEST CENTRAL OHIO.