



Merry Christmas

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ANNUAL FALL BREAKFAST FORUM

The Annual Fall Breakfast Forum was held on October 23 with 175 area business leaders and elected officials attending. Speaker, Robert Morgan, Senior Consultant at ProBank Austin told the audience that he predicts steady economic growth should continue into 2020. Factors such as a possible US-China Trade Deal, Impeachment, and the US Presidential Election "could" have an effect on the economy in one way or another, but that

the overall economy is very solid right now. The forecast of steady growth is based on the fact that the consumer spending side of the economy (which accounts for 70% of the overall GDP) is very robust due to 50 year historic low unemployment rates. With that fact not changing anytime soon (there are still 7 million un-filled jobs in the US), the overall economy is expected to remain steady moving into 2020 as was the case in 2019.

101 N. Main St.,
Room 102
Celina, Ohio 45822
419.586.4209 • 419.586.2963
Fax: 419.586.1714
jared.ebbing@mercercountyohio.org

Jared C. Ebbing, P.E.
Community/Economic Development Director

Commissioners:
Greg Homan, Chairman
Jerry Laffin, Vice Chairman
Rick Muhlenkamp, Member



MERCER COUNTY RECEIVES ACCOLADES

Mercer County Community and Economic Development Department honored with 2019 NREDA Organization Excellence Award at the annual Conference in Kansas City, MO.

Development Department was chosen by a national selection committee from across the nation. NREDA is a vital network of rural economic development professionals providing expertise and national leadership on rural issues.

Mercer County Community and Economic Development Department received the 2019 NREDA Organization Excellence Award for implementing a successful rural economic development program for their area.

"In addition to success with building a young and vibrant workforce for the future, the Mercer County Community and Economic Development Department has excelled at the traditional economic development task of attracting and growing businesses." Stated Dennis Mingyar, NREDA Awards Committee Chair.

Mercer County Community and Economic



EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS
Unemployment rate for Mercer County for the month of October, 2019:

October, 2019	2.6%
September, 2019	2.8%
October, 2018	2.7%
Labor Force	23,400
Employment	22,800
Unemployment	600

Rates for surrounding counties:

Auglaize County	3.2%
Darke County	3.6%
Shelby County	3.5%
Van Wert County	3.4%

THE RLF PORTFOLIO OF MERCER COUNTY

Funds on Hand	\$638,000.00
Available Funds to Lend	\$100,000.00
Total # of Loans	34
Number of Jobs Created	1,742

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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WWW.MERCERCOUNTYCONNECT.COM
AND ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE:
[MERCERCOUNTYCONNECT](https://www.facebook.com/MERCERCOUNTYCONNECT)

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Together, we can...

VARIOUS ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS WERE RECENTLY COMPLETED AS A RESULT OF EXPANSIONS IN 2019!

SR 118 - Mercer Landmark, Inc./MPS Feed

SR 703 - Tri Star Career Compact

SR 33 - The Fremont Company



REPORT: CELINA REGIONAL ECONOMY FASTEST-GROWING IN STATE

Story credit: Tom Stankard (Daily Standard)

Recent data shows the Celina region has the fastest-growing economy of all Ohio cities, according to an Ohio State University economist.

"Since 2010, Celina is growing 20 times faster than the U.S. non-metro (rural) average in terms of jobs," OSU economist Mark Partridge said.

Celina Mayor Jeff Hazel said this is due to the more than 600 businesses located within a mile of the city. Additionally, those who work here don't want to be just a number, they want to be part of the community.

"People want to know their neighbors and not be a stranger," he said.

People are attracted to work in rural cities such as Celina because they offer a high quality of life in safe communities



Adam Wolfe works a Minster 800 Press as he makes seat risers on Wednesday at Pax.

with a low cost of living, Partridge said.

Young people often leave rural Ohio cities to start their careers in bigger ones, but Partridge and Hazel both said they want to return to start a family.

"They want to raise their kids in a place with values and morals," Hazel said. "There's a lot to be said about communities like this."



In 2018, Mercer County was awarded an Ohio EPA 319* grant to restore a section of stream through the Mercer County Elks Golf Course. This project restored approximately 2,000 feet of stream and an associated five acres of floodplain area. The project doubled the capacity of the stream section, added additional habitat features and improved the stream substrate. 240 large trees have been planted and over 1,000 shrubs will be planted in the early spring. Look for a public tour of this project in the late spring of 2020!

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2ND ANNUAL SENIOR CAREER CONCERT

Mercer County once again participated in the second annual, INSPIRE CAREER CONCERT for area high school seniors. The event was held on September 20 at Edison State Community College.

The goal is to actively link High School Seniors (over 1,000 attended) from the 4-county area (Mercer, Auglaize, Darke and Shelby) to local businesses (over 100 attended) for future internships, summer, or full-time employment possibilities in the future. This is an inspirational event focused on helping students find their voice and career path. The event is a great opportunity to bring High School Seniors together with local employers in order to make a meaningful/personal connection before they graduate. The event included a career fair, a keynote speaker,

and music to keep the students energized throughout the day.

The keynote speaker/band was Attaboy. They are a band with a positive message for students. The group functions as speakers for schools, but via music. By uniquely combining energetic and relevant music with a powerful spoken message, the band impacted students by sharing their personal experiences.

This event is a great example of collaboration in action. The event was sponsored by Mercer County Economic Development, Hometown Opportunity, Auglaize Mercer Business Education Alliance (AMBE), Darke County Economic Development, Sidney Shelby Economic Partnership, Mercer & Auglaize County ESC, and Auglaize County.

