

# Workforce UPDATE

Unemployment in Northwest Ohio went from 9.73% to 6.93% a year ago while the rest of the country went from 8.8% to 7.6%. Ohio's unemployment was 6.6% as of December, 2012. In January of 2012, NW Ohio had a 9.73% unemployment rate compared to 8.8% for the rest of the US on that same date. The labor force in our area is up about 0.1% compared to the remainder of the country which is up 1% from a year ago. The total available workforce grew by 700 people from one year ago. The Gross Regional Product metric continues to trend upward which indicates healthy growth from our workforce. Eight out of the ten top companies hiring are healthcare facilities and healthcare is the leading open job category in our area followed by sales and office administration. This is a noticeable change in job openings and indicates the increase in demand for healthcare

skills in the area over the last quarter. Marathon Oil and General Motors joined the top ten list of manufacturing companies hiring this period. Business and financial positions also joined the list for top five open occupations.

The Regional Growth Partnership and JobsOhio, in collaboration with Owens Community College, offers a quarterly snapshot of the economic health in Northwest Ohio. These items indicate the strength of our regional economies as well as success stories. Much of the information in this report comes from Ohio Means Jobs "Help Wanted Analytics" data.

## Top 10 Corporations Hiring

1. ProMedica
2. ProMedica Bay Park Community Hospital
3. ProMedica St. Luke's Hospital
4. Pizza Hut
5. ProMedica Flowers Hospital
6. Fostoria Community Hospital
7. Caring Home Health Services
8. HCR Manor Care
9. Blanchard Valley Health Systems
10. Owens Community College

## Top 5 Open Occupations

1. Healthcare Practitioners and Technical
2. Sales
3. Office and Administrative Support
4. Transportation and Material Moving
5. Management Occupation

## Top 10 Manufacturers Hiring

1. Owens Corning
2. First Solar
3. General Motors Corporation
4. Owens-Illinois, Inc.
5. Cooper Tire & Rubber Company
6. Marathon Oil Company
7. Johns Manville
8. PepsiCo
9. Whirlpool
10. Chrysler

## Top 5 Open Manufacturing Occupations

1. Architecture and Engineering
2. Production
3. Management
4. Business and Financial Operations
5. Computer and Mathematical

Source: Wanted Analytics

## A Square Deal for All: Manufacturers Roundtables



**Kay Reiter**  
Sandusky County Economic Development Corporation

Manufacturing roundtables are strategic initiatives to assist the growth and development of local business operations. Sandusky, Williams and Henry Counties each have created manufacturers' roundtables of over 40 manufacturers who meet up to four times a year. The networking and information sharing that its members have obtained from each other has provided important value in successfully managing their operations. Plant tours are usually conducted following each session and have become a source of insight and new solutions to members faced with issues in their own operations.

According to Kay Reiter of Sandusky County Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC), "Each meeting includes a program session that is determined by the manufacturer members who are able to see the operations of other area industrial companies during the plant tours and how others address safety, quality, efficiency, training and other issues. It is C-Level to C-Level executives speaking."

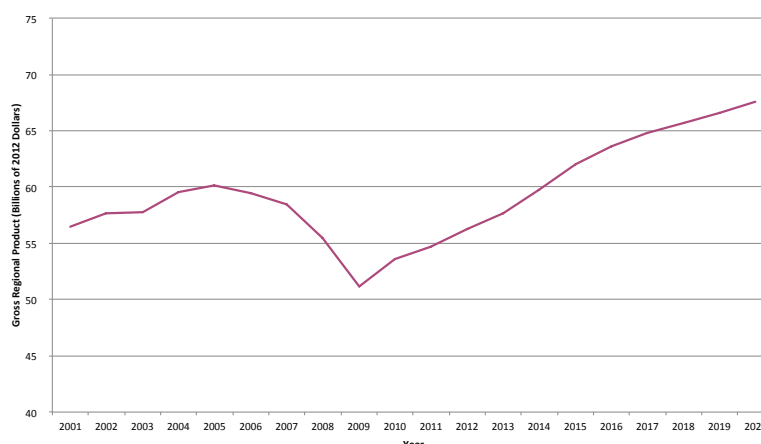
Manufacturers have learned that significant improvements to operations take place by having a supplier in close proximity. A new supplier facility in close proximity offers manufacturers reductions to inbound logistics costs. Reduced inventory levels can also occur resulting in lower inventory carrying costs. Recruiting suppliers and customers of established businesses already located in the county has been made a strategic priority of the roundtables.

Williams and Henry County have also established manufacturing roundtables. They anticipate dividends to both the manufacturers involved and to their respective economic development organizations. The group will address such topics as workforce training and development, industrial energy efficiency projects, economic development incentive programs for retention, expansion projects, recruitment of suppliers, and new facility locations. "The manufacturer participants of the roundtable set the direction and programs for the year. We are there for support," said Diamond Zimmerman of Williams County Economic Development Corp and Robert McColley of Henry County CIC.

If any area economic development organization is interested in starting a successful manufacturing roundtable, there are a few lessons that were learned. All three economic development officials agreed that the group must be self-led by members and limited to only manufacturers. Plant tours and topics for discussion come from the roundtable members. The focus is on them. The economic development organizations provide meeting support and are the only non-manufacturing members.

The future expectations of manufacturing roundtables are to grow membership and share information to solve members' problems. A strong manufacturing base will attract investment and strengthen the area workforce. Manufacturing careers will also be promoted when there are many voices coming together and building a reputation of success.

Real Gross Regional Product (\$2012) for the Northwest Ohio Region from 2001 until 2020



### Gross Regional Product

Market value of all final goods and services produced within a given area and time.

# Taking Success for Granted

Workforce training is like any other business investment. Metrics must be established that measure the return on money invested in employees. Common metrics often include new and retained business, reduced waste, regulatory compliance and penalty avoidance, productivity improvement and accident prevention. Depending on the type of business, this can represent a sizable return on training dollars. One challenge however, is to find ways to pay for training courses.

Owens is a resource partner that reduces actual training costs through many grants awarded to benefit area businesses. Over the last two years, the college has partnered on successful grant proposals for over \$2.5 million targeted towards workforce training. These grants were anticipated to provide training to over 1,000 new or incumbent workers in northwest Ohio. This is good news for area businesses who seek a competitive workforce while controlling training investments.

Owens Community College Workforce Services provides simple and effective ways to plan a training solution. The two biggest hurdles to planning effective training solutions are time and money. Often, training is recommended after business processes break down. Owens helps companies save time with custom training that is provided with 24/7 convenience by qualified instructors as well

as professional online or blended learning formats. Meeting your time and place needs is part of our solution-oriented service.

Eleven companies participated in over 80 different training programs that addressed their productivity and competence needs to retain and improve jobs in our area. Certain programs, such as Supervisory Skills, OSHA Safety Training, Lean and Six Sigma, Time Management, Team Building, and Process Technology, were more popular. These courses were industry-specific and delivered to the client's place of business to reduce travel expense and to save time. Two of the companies, First Solar and Pro-Pak, documented impressive savings as a return on their training investment. They improved quality and increased customer satisfaction as a direct result of their participation in such programs.

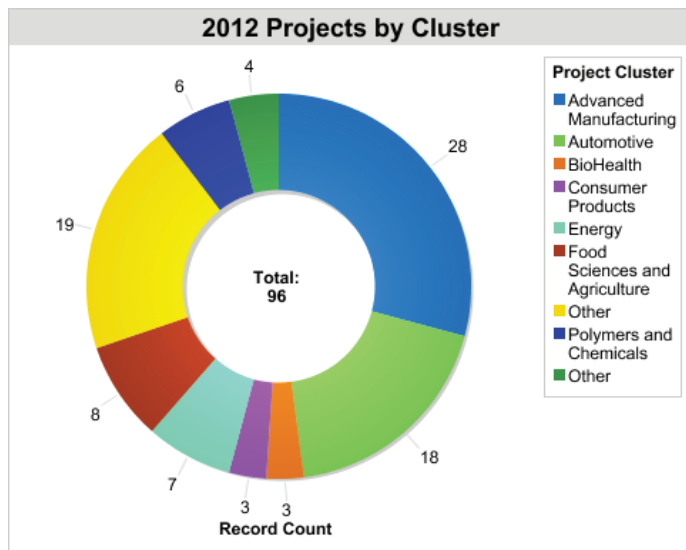
The following is a list of a few of the companies in the region that have collectively been awarded over \$2 million from the Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) Energizing Career Grants and have benefited from Owens training:

- Diamond Plastics
- AP Alternatives
- Applied Energy Technologies
- Pro-Pak Industries
- First Solar

Additional grants of more than \$600,000 were also awarded to Owens Community College to reduce employee training costs in our community by the following organizations.

- Wal-Mart Foundation –Worker Training Grant
- Ohio Board of Regents Training Equipment Grants
- U.S. Department of Transportation – Commercial Motor Vehicle Operator Training Grant
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Workforce Development and Job Training Grants
- American Association of Community Colleges – Plus 50 Program: Encore Careers

Working with Owens College to develop a training strategy to increase productivity and avoid compliance issues is a great return on investment. It gets even better when one teams up with Owens for grants that can further reduce the cost of training. Contact Michael Bankey, Associate Vice President of Workforce and Community Services at Owens Community College, michael@owens.edu, to reduce training costs and develop your company training strategy for productivity improvement or meeting compliance objectives. His team may be able to find grants that your company may be qualified and eligible to be awarded.



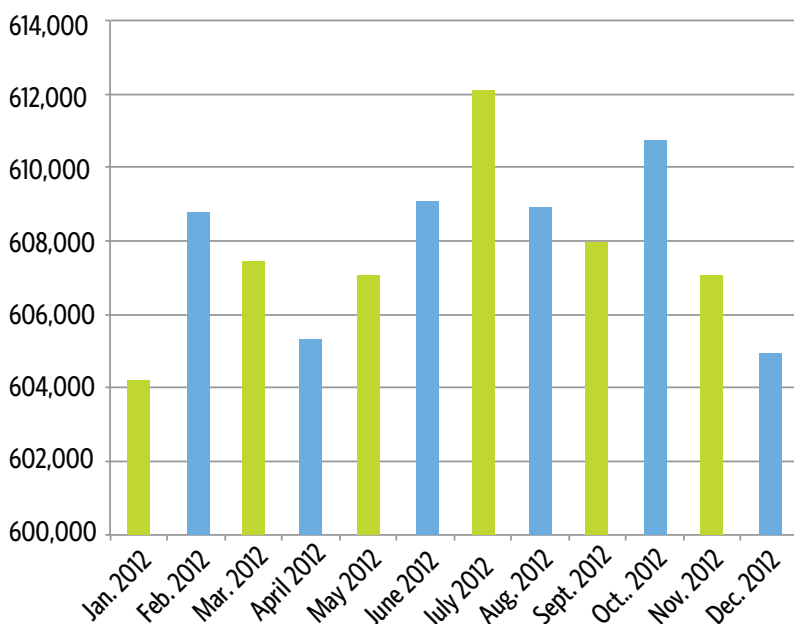
## JOB OHIO AND INVESTMENT - 4TH QUARTER 2012

**48** Closed Won Projects

**4,741** Jobs Created & Retained

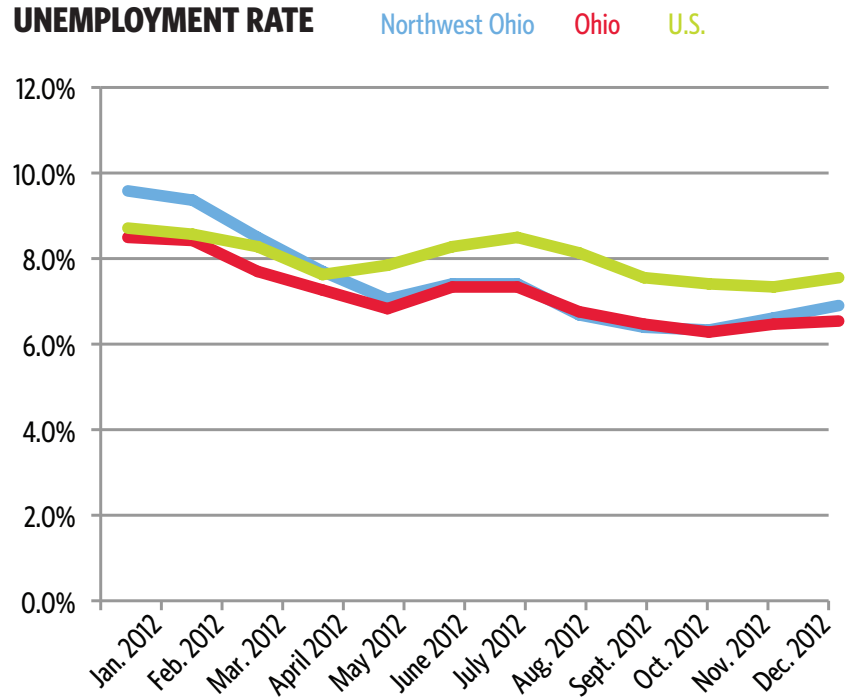
**\$991,790,845** Capital Investment

## TOTAL AVAILABLE WORKFORCE (EMPLOYED/UNEMPLOYED PERSONS) 17 NORTHWEST OHIO COUNTIES FROM JANUARY - DECEMBER 2012



Source: ohiohmi.com

## UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



Source: ohiohmi.com