



The December 2007 Open for Business report highlights projects and related announcements that will assist with the creation of new jobs and the preservation of a significant number of existing jobs.

### **Manufacturer opens plant in Marshall County**

Warren Distribution has opened a plant in Glen Dale in Marshall County. The automotive supply company, which manufactures and distributes automotive aftermarket products, currently employs 45 workers in the plant. Blow-molding and other packaging lines are active now. By spring, the company plans to open three more packaging lines and expand the number of employees up to 70. Warren Distribution invested about \$13 million to upgrade the Glen Dale site. The Omaha, Neb.-based manufacturer selected the location for its proximity to the Ohio River, coupled with easy access to rail and interstate road systems.

### **West Virginia's first vehicle assembly plant is up and running**

Hino Motors Manufacturing USA Inc rolled the first truck off the line this week at its new assembly plant in Williamstown, Wood County. Hino Motors of West Virginia invested \$8.6 million to develop its assembly line there. Workers have already produced 25 light- and medium-duty trucks as part of their training. Those vehicles will be sold, as will the first official vehicles to roll off the assembly line. The plant currently employs 72.

Hino is a subsidiary of the Toyota Group. It is the only Japanese truck manufacturer to be producing vehicles in the United States.

### **New statewide hotline available to answer business questions**

Entrepreneurs across West Virginia now have a toll-free number to help answer their business questions. Effective immediately, businesses can call the West Virginia Business Answer Line at 1-888-982-7232 (1-888-WVA-SBDC) to connect with information on business services available in the state. The Business Answer Line will be staffed during normal work hours, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

### **New coal mine to open in Kanawha County**

Magnum Coal Co. plans to open a new underground mine in Cabin Creek, Kanawha County. The Winchester Mine is expected to employ 50 workers when it becomes operational in early 2008. Magnum expects the mine to produce about 670,000 tons of electric utility-grade coal a year. The Winchester mine will be operated by Magnum affiliate Remington Limited Liability Co.

### **Gov. Manchin leads trade mission to China**

West Virginia businesses that benefit from the coal industry were featured during Gov. Joe Manchin's trade mission to China in November. Executives from 11 West Virginia companies participated in the mission, which included exhibiting at the China Coal & Mining Exhibition in Beijing. The governor also visited a coal-to-liquids plant in China. The goal of the mission was to help West Virginia's small- to medium-sized manufacturers in their effort to export products to China. China has grown to be the state's fourth-largest export market.

### **Augusta Systems receives \$10 million contract from U.S. Navy**

Morgantown-based Augusta Systems Inc. has received a three-year contract from the U.S. Navy. The competitively bid contract, valued at up to \$10 million, is for technologies that will enable a distributed, intelligent network of battlefield sensors and unmanned vehicles. The technologies enable unmanned vehicles to operate autonomously with limited intervention by human operators.

### **EyeMarker Systems earns second place in Global Security Challenge 2007**

EyeMarker Systems Inc. won second place in the Global Security Challenge 2007. The Global Security Challenge is an annual business plan competition to select the most promising security technology startups in the world. The challenge is organized by students at London Business School, with partner organizations such as the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. EyeMarker developed a non-invasive ocular scanner that screens for toxic exposures, systemic injury and systemic diseases. Based in the West Virginia University Business Incubator in Morgantown, Monongalia County, EyeMarker Systems established research capabilities in close proximity of WVU and the WVU Robert C. Byrd Health Sciences Center.

### **West Virginia University forensic program receives \$5.5 million donation**

California businessman Ming Hsieh has given \$5.5 million to West Virginia's forensic and investigative science program. The founder of Hsieh Family Foundation donated \$2 million for the construction of a new classroom building named in his honor. In addition, the foundation pledged \$1 million to endow two professorships in the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences. Cogent Inc., a biometric identification company of which Hsieh is chairman, is supplying state-of-the-art technology for the forensic program.

### **Alcon designated as Gold Well Workplace**

The Huntington Alcon IOL Manufacturing Division of Alcon Laboratories has been designated a national Well Workplace by the Wellness Councils of America. The levels of designation are Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum. The highest level possible for a first year application is Gold. Alcon is one of only 159 companies to achieve a Gold designation during its first year of application. Among the activities that helped Alcon achieve its distinction were the tobacco-free workplace policy, smoking cessation assistance, an employee assistance program, fitness facility reimbursement and numerous benefits aimed at maintaining good health. Alcon has also been named among the Fortune Magazine's 100 Best Companies to Work For each of the past nine consecutive years.

### **Charleston-based CDI IT Solutions achieves HDI Support Center Certification**

The West Virginia Enterprise Help Desk of CDI IT Solutions has achieved the HDI Support Center Certification award. HDI, the world's largest membership association for IT service and support professionals, offers the industry's leading certification program for support centers.

Mark Balawejder, senior vice president of Solutions Delivery for CDI IT Solutions, said, "We feel the well-educated and skilled workforce available to us in West Virginia has helped us achieve this recognition and we look forward to the continued growth and success of our Charleston-based office."

### **West Virginia Small Business Development Center helps 301 clients in October**

The West Virginia Small Business Development Center (SDBC) provided more than 523 hours of counseling and training to 301 clients last month helping to create or retain 16 jobs. The SDBC has provided 523 hours of counseling and training to 301 clients this fiscal year beginning October 1. Seven loans totaling \$1,493,475 were approved in October.

### **HMS Technologies CEO receives Achievement Award from Department of Defense**

Harry M. Siegel, president and CEO of HMS Technologies Inc. in Martinsburg received an Inaugural Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Achievement Award from the Department of Defense. The criteria for selection include the corporations' success, business acumen, high-level competitiveness and rapid growth. A West Virginia Small Business Development Center client, HMS Technologies is an advanced IT systems integrator with business lines in technology integration, business process optimization and enterprise solutions.

### **West Virginia artist chosen to create ornament for White House Christmas tree**

West Virginia artist Sheila Brannan created an ornament that will be showcased on the 2007 White House Christmas tree. Traditionally, the First Lady selects a theme for the tree and taps the talents of American artists to create the ornaments. In keeping with this year's theme of national parks, Brannan's design represents the Appalachian Trail. Brannan was chosen by the National Park Service to create a design representative of this unusual unit of our national park system. She owns Sheila Brannan Art & Design in Shepherdstown. An image of the ornament is available at <http://www.wvopenforbusiness.com/ornament/front.jpg>.

### **WVDO participates in Canadian Manufacturing Technology 2007**

The West Virginia Development Office exhibited at the recent Canadian Manufacturing Technology Show (CMTS). Featuring more than 600 leading manufacturers and distributors, the event showcases the latest in machine tools, automation technologies, production methods and management strategies. CMTS was held in Toronto, Canada.