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JCEDC'S PARTNERSHIP WITH THE WISCONSIN PROCUREMENT INSTITUTE HAS PROVEN VALUABLE FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL BUSINESSES

The 13th Annual Government Opportunities Business Conference (GOBC) – previously known as the Volk Field Small Business Conference – is rapidly approaching July 30 & 31. This conference is a catalyst for the increased volume of government contracts and subcontracts that local businesses have seen in recent years. It is held annually at either the Volk Field Air National Guard Base (ANGB) in Camp Douglas or the Fort McCoy Military Base installation in Tomah.

A full two-day event with an evening reception on Day 1, GOBC includes a wealth of information for its attendees from technical trainings, information security, finding and bidding on government contracts, and teaming with prime contractors for larger jobs. Sufficient time is built in for one-on-one meetings with buyers, break-out sessions, and conference-wide networking. Several hundred participants are drawn from all around the state and even the greater Midwest area each year to hear the latest trends and opportunities from government, political, and private presenters.

“The US Department of Veterans Affairs Hospital in Tomah, the Volk Field ANGB, and the Fort McCoy installation have significant economic impact in Central Wisconsin. They also provide a great opportunity for our State’s small businesses, especially those in rural parts of the State.” says Aina Vilumsons, CEO of the Wisconsin Procurement Institute (WPI), the conference’s lead organizer. *“The Juneau County Economic Development Corporation (JCEDC) has been a great partner in brining government contracting and subcontracting opportunities to Wisconsin businesses.”*

JCEDC initiated the GOBC annual conference in 2006 at Volk Field ANGB as a way of addressing the economically depressed status of Juneau County. By partnering with WPI, JCEDC was able to reach further and help small businesses throughout the entire state. Terry Whipple, Executive Director of JCEDC says, *“Back then, Juneau County was classified as a Distressed County and a HUBZone (Historically Underutilized Business Zone). We started this annual conference to help our businesses, and it worked. Today Juneau County has lost both of these*

statuses because it has raised the number of local businesses doing work for government entities, as well as the average wage per capita.”

Recently, at the 10th Annual GOBC event, Mark Aumann (photo: left) presented a letter from Congressman Ron Kind to Terry Whipple (photo: center) and Aina Vilumsons (photo: right) which states, *“It is with great pleasure that I extend these words of congratulations and thanks to honor your vital role in the success of the Annual Government Contracting and Business Conference at Volk Field... [this conference] has grown to include Federal and State buyers from across the Midwest and a growing list of partners, supporters and participants.”*



The partnership between JCEDC and WPI has blossomed to serve Juneau County – and the entire state of Wisconsin – very well. WPI’s satellite office in Camp Douglas, which is located under the same roof as JCEDC, has gone from one government contract specialist to three in the last 18 months. These specialists - David Olson (photo: right), Mark Dennis (photo: center),



and Mike Lesneski (photo: left) - serve Juneau County and most of the Central and Northern counties in the state. WPI’s main office in Milwaukee serves all points South and East. In addition to coordinating GOBC, these specialists conduct one-on-one counseling sessions with small and start-up business owners to assess if they would benefit from government contracting, and then take them step by step through the

registration process, locating opportunities, and bidding on the solicited products and services. Their time and professional expertise are funded by the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and are therefore provided at no cost to local businesses.

The WPI - JCEDC partnership has also generated a series of Cyber Security Trainings for local businesses, offered information sessions for the Juneau County Inventors & Entrepreneurs (I&E) Club, and most recently developed the Volk Field Community Council (VFCC). The VFCC Founders and Cornerstone Members are a group of passionate, dedicated individuals with a three-part mission: (1) Advocacy for Volk Field ANGB's continued success and federal utilization as the premier Counterland Training Airspace, (2) Economic impact on the surrounding community, and (3) Inspiration of local rural youth to explore the fields of study in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Aerospace, and Math).

Colonel David May (photo: right, presenting at last year's GOBC), Commander of Volk Field ANGB, states, *"JCEDC and WPI play integral roles in the region. The activity on base and in the surrounding area has dramatically increased since the expansion of the military operations in Central Wisconsin. We look forward to hosting the Government Opportunities Business Conference and meeting with attending businesses and government representatives this July."*



For details or registration information for the 2019 Government Opportunities Business Conference, visit www.volkfieldsbconference.org. For questions or to schedule a complimentary assessment for your business' suitability to compete for government contracts, please call (608) 427-2086 or email one of the contracting specialists: davido@wispro.org, markd@wispro.org, or michaell@wispro.org.

For further information on Juneau County Economic Development Corporation (JCEDC), the Juneau County Inventors & Entrepreneurs (I&E) Club, or the Volk Field Community Council (VFCC), please visit www.JuneauCounty.com or call (608) 427-2070.

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