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News

Macomb County Executive
Mark A. Hackel



Planning & Economic Development

For Immediate Release

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Macomb County business award winners announced

A crowd of approximately 400 gathered at Fern Hill Golf Club today to learn the results of the Macomb County Business Awards.

Macomb County Executive Mark A. Hackel joined Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development Director John Paul Rea to recognize the following award winners:

▪ **Champion of Workforce Development: Tweddle Group, Clinton Township**

As a global leader in information solutions, Tweddle is focused on creating innovative communications to best address the information needs of the automotive industry. Through processes that seamlessly integrate information development, management and delivery, the company produces high-quality, value-driven print, mobile and interactive communications for vehicle owners and automotive sales and service personnel. Tweddle provides classes to train managers to make good hiring decisions. New employees go through a robust onboarding process, including a tour, department overviews and tiered-job training. Tweddle University is an in-house program aimed at professional and personal development. Their strong social media presence highlights many diverse employee-driven committee events. www.tweddle.com. Contact: Paul Arnegard (586) 770-9401.

▪ **Corporate Citizen: Henry Ford Macomb Hospital, Clinton Township**

Henry Ford Macomb Hospital is a 451-licensed bed health care organization, offering acute and tertiary care at the Clinton Township hospital, behavioral health services at the Mount Clemens hospital and comprehensive outpatient care at six health centers. The hospital developed the innovative prevention program Faith Community Nursing; partnered with Macomb County schools through their School Health Network to facilitate a culture of wellness, especially in underserved populations; donated funds and professional resources to Operation Rx to eliminate prescription drug abuse and overdose; and sponsored many health promotion, wellness and disease prevention organizations including CARE House, Macomb County Food Bank and local senior centers. www.henryfordmacomb.com. Contact: Barbara Rossmann (586) 263-2701.

▪ **Diversification Leader: Blake Farms, Armada**

Blake Farms has undergone many changes over the years due to the forward thinking of the Blake family. They have expanded to three locations and have land leases on other orchards to use their fruit for their products. Blake's has grown a seasonal business into a year-round operation, diversifying products to provide stability during years of difficult weather conditions. They meet the changing demand of their customers through offering new products, such as hard cider. Blake Farms has added a winery, applied for special land use for outdoor events and offers many family and nighttime attractions including a haunted hayride. www.blakefarms.com. Contact: Paul Blake (810) 459-3123, Pete Blake (810) 459-3127.

- **Efficiency Expert: Pioneer Metal Finishing, Warren**

Pioneer offers a wide array of metal finishing services including anodizing and electroless nickel; paint and powder coating; and chromate, tin zinc and precious metal plating. Their location on Stephens was looking to reduce their environmental footprint and utility usage. To accomplish this, the plant invested significant capital to upgrade their older regenerative thermal oxidizer unit. The new unit destructs 98 percent of emissions, reduces natural gas usage and allows for internally-conducted cleanings and control monitoring. Under the leadership team at the Industrial Highway location, productivity has increased 19 percent over the past year and profitability has increased almost 200 percent. www.pioneermetal.com. Contact: Eric Rosenberg (586) 480-1716.

- **Model of One Macomb: St John Macomb-Oakland Hospital (SJMOH), Warren**

As a member of St. John Providence and Ascension, SJMOH is part of the nation's largest Catholic and nonprofit health system. In response to a booming Middle Eastern population in Macomb County, SJMOH created several programs to better serve Arab Chaldean patients. An Arab Chaldean patient navigator provides continuum care management and serves as a bilingual public health outreach specialist for Iraqi immigrants. SJMOH introduced Middle Eastern food, Arabic television channels in patient rooms and Arabic signage throughout the hospital. They provide mental health services geared toward recent immigrants and established a prenatal education and breastfeeding support group for Arab Chaldean mothers. www.stjohnprovidence.org. Contact: Kim Liebetreu (586) 573-5929.

- **Startup Business to Watch: Bakes & Kropp, Mount Clemens**

Bakes & Kropp is a cabinetry company that designs and manufactures luxury kitchens, baths and closets for some of the country's most valuable real estate. Experiencing considerable demand along the East Coast, they look to grow the firm into a globally-recognized brand. Headquartered in Macomb County, they have access to a rich history of skilled trades. Their production team provides consistent quality and quick lead times to give them a competitive advantage. Thriving sales have allowed for top market wages, improved insurance offerings and quarterly profit sharing bonuses. In less than 21 months, they have hired 12 new employees and tripled production space. www.bakesandkropp.com. Contact: Dayna Novak (888) 206-0015 ex. 1006.

In addition to the above mentioned awards, Rea also recognized the **Michigan Economic Development Corporation as the Economic Development Partner of the Year** for their longstanding support of Macomb County's economic development initiatives.

Beacon of Economic Development, a recognition reserved only for special circumstances, was presented to **Stephen N. Cassin**, recently retired director of the department. Cassin was credited for developing the county's first-ever economic development strategy and a string of successful projects including the formation of the Macomb-Oakland University Business Incubator, branding of Michigan's defense assets and a ballpark for a developing semi-professional, independent baseball league currently under construction in Utica.

This was Macomb County's fourth annual celebration of business. The event was sponsored by Henry Ford Macomb Hospitals and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, along with support from Advancing Macomb, Automation Alley and First State Bank. Emceed by Fox 2 Detroit's favorite anchor Huel Perkins, other speakers included Kim Yost, CEO for Art Van Furniture who offered the 68-Day Challenge as his keynote address and Lisa Gordon of Workforce Intelligence Network who offered information about MI Bright Future, a networking tool designed to connect employers with the future workforce.

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