

Journal

Volume 5, Number 1

April 2007

A REPORT TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

PROGRESS IN 2006

Recently, someone asked me to describe JARI's 2006 achievements. Without hesitation, I responded that the year was vital to strengthening the resources the region needs to remain a competitive force in an increasingly global marketplace.

Specifically, these resources include modern, accessible sites to help attract new business; incentives and intensive support that encourage entrepreneurs to launch their companies in our region; and workforce development programs that give employees the skills they need to meet the demands of a 21st century economy.

With these goals in mind, in 2006 we focused our efforts on targeted initiatives designed to reap significant dividends for our region's future. For example, we:

- ◆ completed JARI Business Park expansion plans and began preparations for a mid-2007 groundbreaking;
- ◆ intensified Greater Johnstown KIZ programming, securing more than \$650,000 in tax credits for GJKIZ companies so that they can reinvest in — and expand - their companies; and
- ◆ counseled 50 local companies on ways to improve their workforce and increase productivity.

At the same time, we never lost sight of our primary mission — job creation and retention. In fact, in 2006 we:

- ◆ helped bring 839 new jobs to the region;
- ◆ retained an additional 2,000 positions;
- ◆ supported the launch of 32 start-up businesses;
- ◆ helped secure \$190 million in defense-related contracts;

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- ◆ trained 624 individuals in areas such as medical coding, Lean Manufacturing, Six Sigma concepts and Project Management;
- ◆ assisted more than 300 local companies via workshops, conferences and one-on-one business counseling.

Our success would not be possible without the steadfast support of Congressman John P. Murtha. We deeply appreciate his faith in our ability to get the job done. We look forward to honoring his commitment to JARI by continuing to pursue new and productive opportunities throughout the year.

On behalf of the JARI staff, I thank you for your continued interest in and support of JARI.

Sincerely,



Linda R. Thomson
President

SAVE THE DATE — MAY 29, 2007

BUSINESS PARK PREPARES FOR GROUNDBREAKING

In late 2006, Johnstown Industrial Development Corporation (JIDC) representatives completed preparations for the JARI Business Park expansion, setting the stage for a May 29th groundbreaking that will add 90 acres and nine parcels to the existing site. The infrastructure build-out is scheduled for completion by the end of the year.

GJKIZ Generates Jobs and Tax Credit Support

The Greater Johnstown Keystone Innovation Zone (GJKIZ) took root in the region in early 2005, just months after Governor Ed Rendell announced the formation of KIZs as part of his \$2.3 billion economic stimulus package.

Under Governor Rendell's plan, KIZs are designed to promote collaboration between local colleges, universities, economic development organizations, government and businesses. Together, these entities can create a virtual environment that stimulates technology commercialization and entrepreneurship.

In 2006, the GJKIZ, under the leadership of JARI's Technology Development team, met or exceeded its goals, including:

- ◆ the launch of three new area start-ups and expansion of several others, creating 43 local jobs;
- ◆ the distribution of five "seed grants" totaling almost \$25,000 to help local businesses with market analyzes, prototype development, production feasibility analyzes and other special needs projects; and
- ◆ the implementation of its inaugural business plan competition for area college students, a program that netted \$7,500 in cash and in-kind business development assistance for first-place winner SSG Sports Innovations.

For the first time, the program also helped secure \$655,000 in tax credits for eight young GJKIZ companies, offering valuable support to the companies as they transition through the stages of business growth. The tax credits were provided to businesses that met specific state-mandated KIZ criteria.



Visit www.gjkiz.com for more information on the tax credit program and the latest program initiatives. ♦

Showcase Draws Sell-Out Crowds

The 2006 Showcase for Commerce was one of the most successful to date, surpassing previous records set for the number of visitors and exhibitors who attended the much-anticipated event.

In fact, the exhibition hall, receptions and workshops operated at standing-room-only capacity.

During Showcase, Congressman Murtha announced that more than \$22.5 million in contracts had been awarded to area companies, fueling continued job growth in the region's diverse economy.

We look forward to the 2007 Showcase for Commerce, scheduled for **May 31** and



June 1 at the Cambria County War Memorial Arena and the Frank J. Pasquerilla Conference Center. It is sponsored by JARI and the Greater Johnstown/Cambria County Chamber of Commerce.

Visit www.showcaseforcommerce.com for more information. ♦

SAVE THE DATE — MAY 31 - JUNE 1, 2007

SHOWCASE FOR COMMERCE 2007

**Don't miss this year's premier
business event!**

JARI Opens New Headquarters

In late November, more than 200 business, civic and elected leaders joined JARI and Greater Johnstown/Cambria County Chamber of Commerce representatives for an official Open House celebrating our new headquarters.



JARI purchased the building at 245 Market Street in downtown Johnstown in early 2006. The staff relocated in May, after renovations to the site were complete. In addition to JARI, the fully occupied building houses the Greater Johnstown/Cambria County Chamber of Commerce, Greater Johnstown Regional Partnership and Enterprise Venture Capital Corporation. ♦

Workforce Development Program Sets New Standards

In just five short years, JARI's Workforce Development program has grown from a concept on paper to one of the most widely recognized programs in the state.

In 2006, the program continued its upward trend. Its Self-Employment Assistance (SEA) program garnered regional recognition from PA CareerLink as a "Best Practice," and membership in its consortia network soared 25 percent, from 233 members in 2005 to 310 members in 2006.

With funding assistance from the state, the SEA program enables entrepreneurs who had been previously employed to maintain their unemployment compensation while their businesses get off the ground. After earning eligibility from the state, they work with JARI on business plan development, financing and other issues.

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(Workforce Development continued)

In 2005, the first year of the program, 14 entrepreneurs finished the coursework. In 2006, participation more than doubled, with 36 individuals earning certificates of completion and next-level business support from JARI.

Like the SEA expansion, the double-digit boost in consortia membership underscores the value that members place in this program. JARI coordinates six regional consortia targeted to the safety, manufacturing, hospitality, health care, and business and education fields in Cambria and Somerset Counties. Members benefit from networking and educational opportunities. They also share information about industry marketing concepts, as well

as available funding sources for employee training and related programming. Consortia membership is free.

In 2006, JARI's success in the consortia arena captured the attention of the Southern Alleghenies Workforce Investment Board (SAWIB). SAWIB has invited JARI and representatives of its consortia to work with them on a regional model that will expand the benefits of consortia membership beyond Cambria and Somerset Counties to businesses across a six-county region.

The Workforce Development program is made possible by funding from the U.S. Small Business Administration. Visit www.jari.com for more information. ♦

JARI would like to thank the following individuals for their service, dedication and support in helping us achieve our mission.

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