

September 2008

Brought to you by Southwest Michigan First

southwest michigan first
The Kalamazoo Region's Economic Catalyst



THE COMMUNITY CAPITALIST

From the Corner Office

Welcome to the first Southwest Michigan First eNewsletter. I have received numerous requests from our members and friends to find out how they can keep on top of what's going on in the Kalamazoo region. To that end, Southwest Michigan First will be bringing to you a monthly recap that includes some things to think on and a look ahead to the things you need to know. Let us help you stay informed.

- Ron Kitchens, CEO of Southwest Michigan First

Jobs and Wealth Creation

Graphic Packaging International announced the investment of \$27 million in

an expansion of its folding carton plant in Kalamazoo that will result in the creation of 160 new jobs. On July 15, 2008, Southwest Michigan First and Governor Jennifer M. Granholm made the announcement in Lansing.

CeeTox, Forensic Fluids and Unifab received \$150,000 loans from the state of Michigan's Company Formation and Growth fund to keep Pfizer talent and resources in Michigan.

Eaton Corporation will expand their Galesburg facility by 22,000 square feet with a \$4.1 million expansion and increase their employee base by an additional 15 employees.

Business Intelligence Associates chose the Kalamazoo Region over sites in New York City and San Francisco for 251 new positions that will be responsible for managing electronic data for corporations facing litigation.

The **Southwest Michigan Innovation Center** announced an 11,000-square-foot expansion to the life science incubator, which will include 38 new offices, a multipurpose conference room and additional space for support functions.

Business Review announced their **Deals of the Year** finalists which include Business Intelligence Associates, Fabri-Kal, Kaiser Aluminum, MPI Research, Parker Aerospace and Southwest Michigan First. The awards will be presented October 24th at the JW Marriott in downtown Grand Rapids.

In the News

The July 28, 2008 edition of *The Wall Street Journal* featured Kalamazoo prominently in **Success Stories: A look at seven places that took different approaches to economic development – and came out ahead.** The article highlighted Kalamazoo's job growth, home building and a rise in school enrollment due to the Kalamazoo Promise.

An article in August 2008's **National Civic Review** discussed Kalamazoo's innovative approach of partnerships and thinking to economic development.

In my *Business Review* column, **And the good news is...**, I encourage you to share the good news of 2008 with those in need in this year's United Way campaign. And in **We**

should be inspired to do great things. I recount all the inspiring things going on around us and challenge each of us to do something inspiring and get to work.

Mark Your Calendars



First & Foremost. Council of 100 members are invited to attend the next First & Foremost breakfast on **October, 22, 2008** from 7:30 am to 9:00 am at Southwest Michigan First. Please RSVP to Megan Roschek at mroschek@swmfirst.com or 269.553.9588.

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241 East Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

P: 269.553.9588 | F: 269.553.6897