

B·C·E·D·C

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Barnstead Creating Green Energy

On June 17, New Hampshire Governor John Lynch and the Executive Council approved a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant through the NH Community Development Finance Authority to the Town of Barnstead. The Belknap County Economic Development Council is the sub-recipient of the grant for the purpose of lending money to start-up wood pellet manufacturer, Lakes Region Pellet, LLC. Located on 135 acres on Depot Street in Barnstead, Lakes Region Pellet, LLC will manufacture super-premium wood pellets for commercial and residential use. The loan from the BCEDC is just one piece of the \$3+ million project costs and comes with the requirement of creating 25 or more full-time jobs with 60% or more required to benefit low- to moderate-income individuals. Approximately 20 indirect jobs are being filled immediately during the retrofitting of the former TIMCO plant, once one of the largest white pine sawmills in New England, which closed in 2003.

“This project will boost the overall economic vitality of Barnstead,” said Jennifer Boulanger, Executive Director of the BCEDC. “An under-utilized property is being redeveloped into a manufacturing facility where new jobs are being created and new commerce transacted, thereby attracting new clients and vendors to the area and other businesses to local businesses, putting money back into the local economy.”

Town Selectman Gordon Preston says, “I am already seeing the benefits. Local truckers are registering their vehicles, and the community is energized.” The town is seeking additional grant funding for development of a wood-fired boiler plant and steam loop to heat municipal buildings, thereby reducing Barnstead’s carbon footprint.

Loggers will benefit from the need for raw materials, and truckers will move raw material into the plant — upwards of five truckloads weekly — and transport up to 10 truckloads of finished product out each week. A large percentage of the raw materials used to produce the wood pellets will come from within a 50-mile radius of the property, providing benefit to area businesses and property owners. According to Gregg True, Executive Vice President and COO of Lakes Region Pellet, LLC, plans are already underway to expand manufacturing capability and to repower existing equipment which would allow for the facility to be self-supporting from an energy perspective.



Executive Councilor Ray Burton and BCEDC Executive Director Jennifer Boulanger shake hands as Barnstead Selectman Gordon Preston and State Representative Elaine Swinford look on.

2008 Directors Award

The BCEDC Directors Award is presented annually to an area business or individual in recognition of contributions to the economic vitality of Belknap County. The 2008 recipient was Lakes Region Linen, recognized for exceptional generosity to community non-profit organizations as well as for its assistance and support of immigrants, refugees, women, and minorities. Company president Debbie Frawley Drake accepted the award from Greg Goddard, immediate past chairman of the BCEDC, during the May 2009 meeting. The company was also honored as the NH SBA 2009 Jeffrey Butland Family-Owned Business of the Year. Lakes Region Linen was recently acquired by General Linen Service of Somersworth.



That's Howe Much

Following its July Board meeting, the BCEDC recognized John Howe, retired editor of The Citizen newspaper, for his years of support and assistance as an Incorporator and friend. Proving that the pen is mightier than the sword, Howe's columns and editorials eloquently reminded readers of the mission and success of the BCEDC in stimulating economic vitality in the Lakes Region and helped to highlight the many jobs created as a result of projects

financed in part by the Council. An engraved desk box was presented to Howe by the Council's David Haley.



John and Fran Howe with David Haley (left).

A Visit with Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter

On May 28, a roundtable discussion with Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter brought together a cross-section of Lakes Region small business owners. Held at Southern New Hampshire University's Laconia Center and hosted by BCEDC, the business forum was sponsored by the New Hampshire Small Business Development Center with assistance from SCORE Lakes Region Chapter. The group discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the region and the impact of the current recession upon various business sectors. Each participant was invited to share issues of concern which need Congressional attention. The Congresswoman responded to business concerns offering suggestions to improve small business access to small business resources. Information was also provided on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act's stimulus funds and projects anticipated to be financed with the money.



Left to right: Leo Glasheen, SCORE Lakes Region Chapter; Jennifer Boulanger, Belknap County Economic Development Council; Warren Daniel, NH Small Business Development Center; Witmer Jones, Small Business Administration; and Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter.

HOT TOPICS

Cold Lunch

A luncheon meeting of BCEDC Incorporators held June 9 offered attendees information about the tax provisions of the America Recovery and Reinvestment Act, an update on progress of the CEDS *Lakes Region Plan for Sustainable Progress* application, and an opportunity to share perspectives on the current business climate. Hopeful signs for better times were shared by representatives of the banking community.

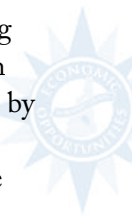


Economic Strength Midyear: A Sneak Peek

Belknap County continues to hold its own during the economic recession, staying in the top tenth percentile for Economic Strength (as measured by Policom Corporation).

The first five months of 2009 reflect positively on the

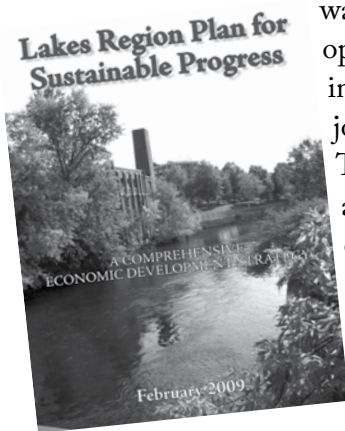
efforts of the BCEDC as Belknap County's labor force grew by 4% or 1,120 participants from December 2008 to May 2009. Although the unemployment rate increased to 6.4% as of May 2009, real job growth of 2% or (550 participants) is calculated for that same period.



MICROPOLITAN	ECONOMIC STRENGTH		LABOR FORCE		UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	
	2009	Dec 2008	May 2009	Dec 2008	May 2009	
Belknap County	27	31,220	32,340	4.8%	6.4%	
Merrimack County	5	80,310	80,520	3.9%	5.6%	
Grafton County	7	47,550	47,630	3.3%	5.4%	
Cheshire County	31	41,150	41,450	3.9%	5.7%	
New Hampshire	--	731,860	737,260	4.3%	6.4%	

The 2008 Community Needs Assessment performed by Lakes Region United Way (*available in PDF format at www.lruw.org*) reported that, when asked about five community life issues, the majority of respondents were most concerned about affordable housing, making a living

wage, local employment opportunities, education in the public schools, and job training opportunities. These issues are being addressed by the goals outlined in the *Lakes Region Plan for Sustainable Progress, a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy*.



Several recent successes are worth noting:

- New Hampshire Employment Security has worked diligently with the Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce to conduct the Adult Success Program, which provides at no cost education, assistance with job search, access to employment counselors, and in some situations public transportation.
- The CEDS Building Employees Subcommittee was successful in refitting the Huot Technical Center at Laconia High School, providing the latest equipment technologies to better preparing young people for the workforce.
- The State of New Hampshire continues to support the NH Job Training Fund through which an employer can receive 50% match funding for training of employees.
- NHES and many resource partners hosted the first Lakes Region Job Fair in May of 2009 with resounding success.

SCORE *First and Fast*

www.scorelakesregion.org

1 SCORE Lakes Region Chapter is on the move. The chapter and American Express teamed up to provide a first-of-its-kind Speed Coaching and Interactive Workshop in Concord, April 30th. More than 60 small businesses from around the state and over a dozen from the Lakes Region attended this engaging, informative event held at the Grappone Center. Governor John Lynch's opening remarks energized participants with sage but humorous advice from his private sector experience. A modular format followed with workshops focused on current business climate issues and one-on-one "Speed Coaching" sessions designed to counter current small business challenges.

In May, a SCORE workshop titled "Managing the Turnaround" helped 13 business owners from the Plymouth area. Northway Bank sponsored the event. In June, the Senator Jeanne Shaheen Small Business Financing Fair, with 16 banks and financial firms participating, was over-subscribed as small business owners eagerly sought new or additional financing to help them through this recession. SCORE NH actively supported this event and was able to connect clients with financing resources. As the national banks pull back from small businesses, local banks are stepping in to meet the needs. See NECN video clip: <http://www.necn.com/Boston/Business/2009/06/29/NH-seeks-small-business-boost/1246318981.html>

SCORE Lakes Region Chapter plans to launch a banking relationship program which will make the chapter a household name among branch managers and commercial lenders, and it also will establish a satellite office in Plymouth.



BELKNAP COUNTY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Lakes Venture Resource Center at SNHU - Laconia Center

2 Airport Road | Gilford, NH 03249 | www.bcedc.org

Together we make a difference

**LEADERSHIP
LAKES
REGION**



As a Leadership Lakes Region participant you will:

- learn about the issues that face our region
- meet with community and state leaders and hone your leadership skills
- network with like-minded professionals
- upon completion you will join over 160 Alumni who are actively engaged in their respective communities

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

for the Fall 2009 program, for more info call 603-524-6791 or visit

www.leadershiplakesregion.org

LEADERSHIP LAKES REGION SALUTES THE CLASS OF 2009

Lyn O'Callaghan, *Belknap County Economic Development Council*;
 Kim Sperry, *Lakes Region Association*; Rae Mello-Andrews, R.N.,
LRGHealthcare; Cindy Hemeon-Plessner, *Meredith Village Savings Bank*;
 Capt. Scott Flanders, *Salvation Army*; Judi Taggart, *Lakes Region United
 Way*; Lisa Clutters, *Automotive Supply Associates*; Robert Masse, *Lakes
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Gilford Fire Department; Donna Kuethe, *Moultonborough Recreation
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 Region Planning Commission*; Karen Wilson, *Laconia Savings Bank*;
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LRGHealthcare; and Dean Ingram, *Laconia Savings Bank*.

