

CCEA First Quarter Newsletter

Note from the CCEA Chairman



Two months ago on January 3, Brian Coughlin succeeded John Czarnecki as president and CEO of the Clinton County Economic Alliance.

First, I would like to thank John for being our founding president. With his 30 years of experience with the State of Michigan, his time at MEDC, and his public policy work, John was the right person for the job. His expertise will be missed. We wish him all the best as he moves his golf and tennis games to Orlando and Palm Strings – at least during the winter months in mid-Michigan.

Brian is a Michigan native who is returning home from Ohio where he most recently completed a one-year contract to reorganize the Erie County Economic Development Corporation (ECEDC). There, he created a tighter focus on ECEDC's core mission of local business retention and expansion and new business and investment attraction. He completely retooled ECEDC's online presence and rebuilt the organization's line of communications with the public and business community.

Prior to that, Brian was the Director of Economic Development for Butler County Ohio located between Cincinnati and Dayton. During his five years in that role, Butler County was selected as the site for a \$470 million biopharmaceutical manufacturing plant employing 500 for Amylin Pharmaceuticals of San Diego and for a Class A GE Aviation office complex to house 1,400 engineers as well as a number of other major projects. A total of \$3.2 billion in new investment was made in Butler County communities during his watch.

For Clinton County, Brian intends to focus on assisting current County businesses including helping them to expand. He will also work to increase CCEA's business attraction efforts by refining and beefing up our website, leveraging our proximity to MSU and its assets and programs, and continuing to target the food processing industry.

Brian, who spent his sophomore year as an MSU student, has a B.A. in Communications from Wayne State University in Detroit. Previous to his economic development career, he was the head of federal and state government affairs for AK Steel, President of the Missouri Manufacturers Association, and Director of State Government Affairs Policy and Planning for Standard Oil which is now part of BP.

He and his wife Roxanne, a Flint native, are in the process of selling their Huron, Ohio home and relocating to our area.

Chris Thelen
CCEA Chairman

Michigan's Food processing Industry

The Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) recently produced an informative new presentation on Michigan's food processing industry entitled "A New Era for an Economic Powerhouse." Food processing is a dynamic industry in mid-Michigan, and is one whose time has come as a focus for economic development.

Over the last 10 years, the Michigan food processing industry has had a compound annual growth of almost 4%. It employs 134,000 and produces 200 commodities ranking us second behind only California in the diverse number of Ag products produced. The financial impact of food processing in Michigan at \$25 billion is only surpassed by the manufacturing industry. Just take a look at this list from MDA:

- Michigan dairy products have a \$5.9 billion impact on the state's economy.
- Apples contribute \$770 million in annual economic impact to the state.
- Michigan processes 95% of the U.S. asparagus crop.
- Cattle and cash receipts for Michigan cattle totaled \$289 million.
- Michigan pork generates \$250 million in sales.
- Michigan produces 70–75% of the tart cherries in the U.S.
- Corn adds nearly \$1.1 billion to Michigan's economy.
- Nationally, we rank first in small red beans, cranberry beans, and black beans and second in navy beans.
- In 2008, Michigan produced an estimated \$156.2 million in potatoes.
- Annual poultry production includes 10 million laying hens producing \$110 million, 5 million turkeys worth \$120 million annually, and 4 to 5 million broilers worth \$12.5 million.
- Soybeans totaled \$600 million in field crop production with soybeans/products and exports worth \$456.8 million in 2008.

- Sugar beets had an annual economic impact of over \$450 million with over one billion pounds of sugar production.
- Michigan wheat contributes a total of nearly \$3 billion annually to the state’s economy.
- And, wine and grapes contribute a total of nearly \$3 billion a year to the state’s economy.
- So have a burger on a bun, a chicken sandwich, or some pork barbeque this weekend; with some fries, asparagus, baked beans, and corn on the cob for sides; and a couple of slices of cherry or apple pie for desert and enjoy. And don’t forget to wash it down with a cool drink of milk or a nice glass of Michigan wine. You will be helping our own food processing and Ag businesses.

Clinton County Third Among Michigan Counties in Median Income

The most recent data available ranks Clinton County third among Michigan counties in median household income. This certainly is helped by the high concentration of MSU and State of Michigan employees who have chosen Clinton County communities for their quality of life and convenient driving distance to work. Restaurant and service businesses should take note of the higher discretionary income our residents have and fill the demand for the increased need for these businesses here.

2009 County-Level Median Household Income for Michigan

<u>County</u>	<u>Median Household Income</u>	<u>% of State Median Household Income</u>
<u>Top 15 Counties</u>		
Livingston County	\$68,514	151.4%
Oakland County	\$62,626	138.4%
Clinton County	\$58,756	129.8%
Washtenaw County	\$54,939	121.4%
Leelanau County	\$54,853	121.2%
Barry County	\$53,566	118.4%
Monroe County	\$53,224	117.6%
Eaton County	\$52,343	115.7%
Ottawa County	\$52,107	115.1%
Lapeer County	\$51,290	113.3%
Midland County	\$51,029	112.8%
Macomb County	\$50,709	112.1%
Allegan County	\$50,487	111.6%

Bottom 10

Houghton County	\$33,589	74.2%
Roscommon County	\$33,273	73.5%
Oscoda County	\$32,928	72.8%
Montmorency County	\$32,809	72.5%
Alcona County	\$32,644	72.1%
Ogemaw County	\$32,585	72.0%
Clare County	\$32,568	72.0%
Ontonagon County	\$32,263	71.3%
Gogebic County	\$32,171	71.1%
Lake County	\$29,373	64.9%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Use Caution When Managing Social Media in the Workplace

By: M. Misbah Shahid, millercanfield.com 313.496.7909

Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn. Welcome to the wonderful world of social networking. Or maybe not, if that networking happens to intrude at work.

With the rise in social media, employers face many challenges—and more than a few risks—in properly monitoring workplace access to popular sites, weighing concerns of privacy and ensuring no unlawful activity transpires on company time.

Be aware of these issues as you separate fact from fiction and shape your business's Internet policies.

1. Using an employee's social media activity to support an adverse employment decision can lead to a wide variety of potential causes of action in any post-termination suit.
2. Special caution must be taken if employees are part of a union. In an adverse employment decision, if the employee's use of a social networking site amounts to concerted activity under the NLRA, an employer's conduct may constitute restraint of a protected activity under labor laws.
3. Employees subject to unfavorable employment actions as a result of using social networking sites may be able to argue they received unequal treatment due to their protected class and charge the employer with discrimination.

4. Employers can also face discrimination claims if they make use of social media sites in hiring and other employment decisions. While it's not illegal to learn about protected characteristics when making hiring decisions, it's important that those individuals making the decisions are trained to be neutral.

5. If an employee uses a site to report that an employer is involved in potentially unlawful activities, and that employee is subsequently disciplined or fired, he or she may have a retaliation claim under Title VII.

6. While there are no published cases that challenge an employer's right to monitor an employee's public Facebook or MySpace page, employers should be aware of privacy laws. Any intrusion into a matter in which an employee has a legitimate expectation of privacy could lead to a claim of invasion of that privacy.

7. And finally, employers should be wary of state laws that require notification prior to monitoring employee e-mail or Internet use. The most important lesson is this: A good workplace policy that addresses the use of social media is absolutely necessary in today's technology-teeming world. At a minimum, that policy should:

- Inform employees that there is no expectation of privacy in their use of a workplace computer.
- Prohibit publishing confidential or proprietary information about the company or employer, and specify the consequences of doing so.
- Reinforce the need to be professional, prudent, and respectful of the company and its customers when privately using a social networking site.

CCEA Calendar

April 12, 7:30 a.m. - CCEA Membership Meeting Clinton County RESA Office, 1013 S. U.S. 27, St. Johns.

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