

Ohio

BUSINESS

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TAX SHORTFALL

INTEL DEAL'S
WINNERS &
LOSERS

AIRSTREAM
TAKES FLIGHT



OHIO SUCCESS AWARDS

49 COMPANIES
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IMPACTED THEIR
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Director Sean Coppens
demonstrates what
"in the zone" looks like
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OHIO SUCCESS AWARDS

The fourth annual Ohio Success Awards showcase the growing businesses of Ohio.

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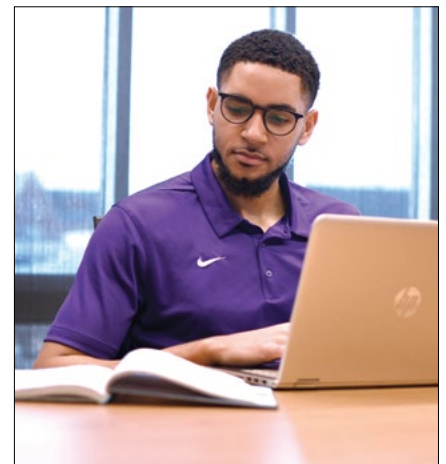
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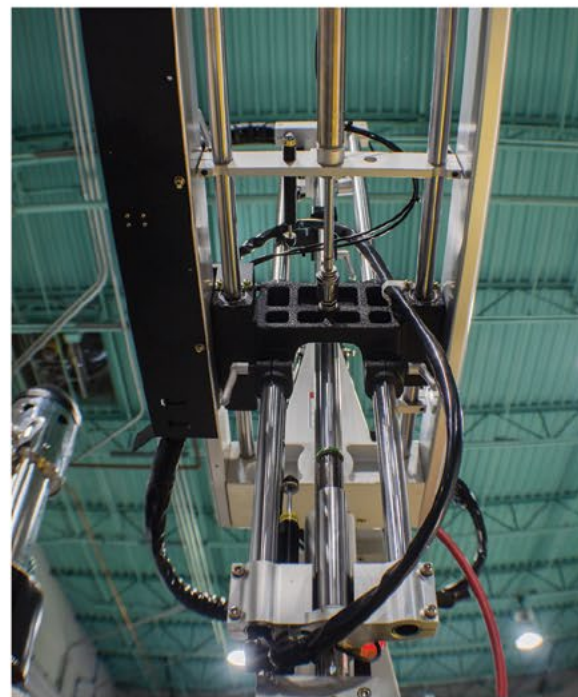
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Time to Celebrate

The fourth annual Ohio Success Awards, as featured in this issue, prove that success comes in many forms. These awards honor growth companies, nonprofits and governmental organizations across the state of Ohio, recognizing the accomplishments of companies that have demonstrated growth in revenue and employees, nonprofits that have made a significant impact and governmental organizations that have created unique value or opportunities.

We are excited to be able to bring back an in-person celebration this year for the winners. It's a joy to bring together these successful organizations into one room. *Ohio Business Magazine* was created based on feedback from those we engaged with. They expressed the desire to unite business decision makers across the state to recognize the energy that can invigorate and inspire us with learning new paths and opportunities. I would encourage you to also attend this celebratory event.

Many other stories in this issue can sure make us proud to be amongst the very best here in Ohio. There is the landing of the big kahuna (Intel) in Central Ohio, and also an Atlantic salmon farm in Williams County. Find out more about Wilberforce University, and the splendor of the Merriman Valley. You can jump into this pesky municipal revenue challenge, as this is the first of a series of articles that will start with Cleveland before we move our way south in later issues this year. Wrapping up, get your fill of Terry Troy's version of Who Dey.



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Iconic Airstream Takes Flight

TRAVEL TRAILER/MOTORHOME
MANUFACTURER CALLS
JACKSON CENTER HOME
BY LYNNE THOMPSON

It's an icon of the American Road. Its retro-yet-futuristic silver bullet design distinguished by a riveted aluminum exterior.

There is simply no mistaking an Airstream.

High-quality construction, form-follows-function interior design and an

accompanying aura of adventure have attracted generations of loyal customers during the Jackson Center company's 91 years in existence. And sales have only increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Bob Wheeler, president and CEO of the company.

"In 2021 we saw a dramatic increase in business over 2020, which was a dramatic increase over 2019," he says. "And we expect 2022 just to continue that trend. We're talking double-digit percentage increases in every one of those years."

Founder Wally Byam built his first travel trailer, a tent pitched atop a Ford Model T

truck bed, in 1929. The Stanford grad loved to camp. But his first wife hated sleeping on the ground. He subsequently sold \$5 plans for building a permanent teardrop-shaped model through a *Popular Mechanics* ad. Requests for trailers from campers with no interest in building their own prompted him to open a Culver City, California, factory in 1931.

"He envisioned a trailer that would go down the road like a stream of air—that's [how] the name Airstream was born," Wheeler says. Byam, inspired by aerodynamic aircraft construction, introduced his first riveted aluminum model in 1936.

By 1952 Byam was looking for a new manufacturing location that would facilitate distributing travel trailers to the East Coast. He settled on a factory for sale in Jackson Center. In 1954, he convinced a water-heater manufacturer to develop the first water-heater system for a trailer. By 1958, Airstream had developed the first



The Pottery Barn edition becomes a home away from home, offering comfort on adventurous road trips.

travel trailer that didn't require external hookups for power and the like.

Other firsts followed, such as integrated furnaces, pressurized water systems and deployable awnings. Recent improvements include technology that allows owners to remotely check tank levels, control temperature and lighting with their smartphones and a self-powered electric travel trailer that doesn't reduce an electric towing vehicle's driving range. It even can drive itself into a campsite when unhitched from a towing vehicle.

In 1974, Airstream ventured into the motorhome market with the Argosy, a product made of less-expensive aluminum that was discontinued in 1978. A Type B motorhome—a motorhome built inside a van chassis, or body—followed in 1987. The aluminum motorhome was discontinued in the 1990s; the Type B evolved into the Interstate. The latter, first offered in 2004, resulted from the availability of Mercedes Benz's Sprinter van chassis in the United States.

"It was the first chassis available here

domestically that really met our brand standards," Wheeler says. "It was big enough, had a great powertrain that got excellent fuel mileage. And it had Mercedes Benz's quality and reputation."

Collaborations and partnerships with the likes of Design Within Reach and Eddie Bauer have endowed interiors with a range of decors. More recent endeavors produced a Tommy Bahama special-edition travel trailer and motorhome and a line of Airstream-inspired Pottery Barn goods that yielded a special-edition travel trailer.

In fact, Wheeler's main challenge is meeting current orders. The same pandemic that is driving demand has created supply-chain, shipping and workforce issues and delayed adding approximately a dozen dealers to the existing 80 or so in the United States.

"We want to grow the company," Wheeler says. "But our approach is, 'If you build it, they will come.' If we continue to deliver an excellent customer experience, then the business takes care of itself." ■



Bob Wheeler



A rendering of what could be accomplished with the Merriman Valley - Schumacher Area Master Plan

Developing Green Space

MERRIMAN VALLEY PLAN HOPES TO BALANCE BUSINESS AND TREES

BY JILL SELL

Emotions run deep when it comes to the fate of the Merriman Valley in Summit County. It is home to a stretch of the Cuyahoga River, green space, relatively undisturbed woodlands, strip shopping centers and confusing traffic patterns.

Merriman Valley is considered by some as the “southern gateway to the Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP).” The CVNP is the seventh most visited national park in the United States with 2.8 million visitors annually and generates \$80 million dollars in economic activity.

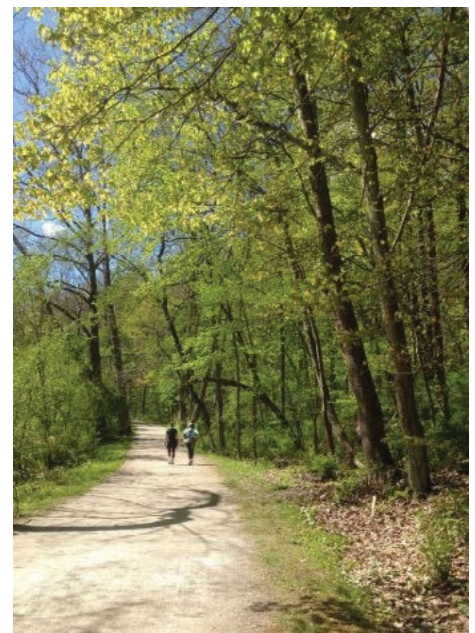
So when the Merriman Valley - Schumacher Area Master Plan was unveiled in

January, residents, as well as local, state and federal officials, took notice. The question is whether economic development/redevelopment and nature can live together.

Based on master plan recommendations and the city’s interests, Jason Segedy, director of Planning and Urban Development for the city of Akron, is pushing for updated zoning codes that would improve the appearance of the retail areas along Merriman Road and Portage Path.

“The idea is to make it look and feel more like a little town instead of just urban sprawl,” says Segedy, citing ideas that could include parking lots at the back of buildings and more “stringent architectural standards.”

Karen Zampelli, president of the Merriman Valley Neighborhood Association, is dedicated to supporting local businesses, improving property values and creating jobs. Zampelli is especially excited about plans for a Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad train depot.



The Towpath Trail in the Merriman Valley (Photo courtesy of the City of Akron)

“The valley has 25 places to eat within a few square miles. It’s unbelievable,” says Zampelli, who envisions rail passengers providing more business to the restaurants.



Diana Colavecchio

But any pedestrian who is brave enough to cross the area's busy streets knows how dangerous that action can be. Segedy

wants more and better sidewalks. He is also concerned with environmental issues, pointing out the need for better regulations, improved stormwater runoff management and planning principles to protect the Cuyahoga River.

Preserve the Valley (PTV), a nonprofit activist organization that wants to see re-development, not new development, in the area, is concerned that the cities don't go far enough in protecting the Merriman Valley. The group also endorses the 100% conservation of the city-owned Theiss Woods.

"It doesn't make economic or environmental sense for them to develop Theiss Woods. They would just be expanding urban sprawl, create deforestation and have to bring in sewer and water," insists PTV spokesman Andrew Holland.

"Sustainable development costs a little more money, but our mantra for the valley, not just the national park or Theiss Woods, is that all of its assets—heritage, cultural, environmental, recreational—are important. If we harm those things, we are not going to retain or bring people to the region," says Holland, who also acknowl-

edges the ecotourism benefits of a more welcoming retail area.

Local government officials and conservation groups understand tweaks to the Merriman Master Plan and what is actually adopted are of major concern. All parties realize they have "to get this right" says Segedy, noting this is not a two- or three-year plan, but many years to come.

Diana Colavecchio, community development director for the city of Cuyahoga Falls, wants the Master Plan to "reflect the general consensus.

"But if we sit on our hands and do nothing, development is going to happen and it's going to be the kind of development people complain about," says Colavecchio.

Colavecchio also knows that her city's economy stands to gain if access and more attractive commercial areas lead to Cuyahoga Falls' business district.

"It's like laying pieces of cheese and pulling them into your city. It's making sure all your businesses benefit from those high visitation numbers in the parks," says Colavecchio. ■



An aerial rendering of the plan for Portage Trail in Cuyahoga Falls

Williams County Hooks a Major Fish Farm

AQUABOUTY TECHNOLOGIES TO CREATE 479,000-SQUARE-FOOT FACILITY

BY JILL SELL

This fish story is not about the big one that got away. Ohio successfully reeled in a \$200 million investment by AquaBounty Technologies that will create a state-of-the-art, 479,000-square-foot Atlantic salmon fish farm in Williams County. The land-based aquaculture project in the village of Pioneer will create between 100 and 120 jobs. Also of great importance is the fact that the company's presence gives Ohio a fin up in the relatively new world of biotechnology and fish farming.

Ground was broken for the facility in fall of 2021 and fish stocking will begin late 2023. Headquartered in Maynard, Massachusetts, AquaBounty Technologies is known for its innovations to improve productivity and sustainability. The Pioneer farm will be the company's biggest large-scale commercial facility, according to AquaBounty Technologies President and CEO Sylvia Wulf. The company's broodstock for the Ohio farm will be supplied by its facility in Prince Edward Island, Canada.

Atlantic salmon is a popular cold-water fish found naturally in the northern Atlantic Ocean and its connecting rivers. Currently 90% of all farmed Atlantic salmon is imported to the United States from outside the country.

"We want to bring affordable and accessible salmon to the world," Wulf says of her company, which has been raising mature salmon for more than 25 years. "We think we can affect health through diet."

AquaBounty's genetically engineered salmon have just one modification, causing more rapid growth. According to Wulf, biotechnology address a "very specific target goal and delivers specific benefits." Without GMO, Wulf believes "we would not



Land-based fish farms are bio-secure, so fish are not exposed to outside risks, allowing them to be raised without antibiotics.

have affordable and accessible food" in a world where demand for food is growing significantly.

According to Wulf, only about 3% of salmon consumed is wild caught. Fishing quotas and inconsistent populations can be challenges with that method, she says. The majority of salmon eaten is raised in ocean pens offshore in places including Iceland, Norway and Chile. But pen farming has its own problems with fish being exposed to diseases and contaminants and damage to pens allowing fish to escape.

"What we are doing is the next generation of how salmon will be farmed," says Wulf, noting that a land-based recirculating aquaculture system (RAS) is just one process that is used to protect fish

from potential problems. "We have more experience raising mature salmon than any other company in the world."

AquaBounty's facilities are bio-secure, so fish are not exposed to outside risks, allowing them to be raised without antibiotics. The company recycles 97 of the water it uses, and that percentage is expected to increase. Wulf also has plans to use salmon by-products for pet food, fertilizer and other products so "all aspects of the salmon are utilized in a positive way."

AquaBounty, which also has a facility to Indiana, chose Ohio and Pioneer in particular because "all the boxes could be checked," according to Wulf. Those needed factors include quality and quantity of ground water, effective energy rates and access to talent and labor. She also pointed to a welcoming and coordinated business climate on both local and states levels that offered economic incentives.

"This level and kind of aquaculture is really a new industry for the United States," says Wulf, whose company sells fresh salmon to retailers, seafood distributors and food service operators. "For Ohio to have a farm like this is really important. As we develop the industry, we can work together with educational institutions, governments and other businesses for everyone's benefit and growth." ■



Sylvia Wulf

Celebrating Justice



Wilberforce University Campus

WILBERFORCE SPEAKER SERIES NAMED FOR UNSUNG HERO OF CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

BY VAL HUNT BEERBOWER

College campuses across the country have historically been places where new ideas incubate. But often new ideas clash with established ideologies and traditional practices, making college campuses a hotbed for activism and disruption. For example, in the 1930s, at Wilberforce University in Wilberforce, Ohio, student Bayard Rustin was outspoken in his demands for equality. During his time as a Bulldog, Rustin discovered what difficulties might lie ahead for those who challenge the status quo. Five years after he was expelled from the university, Rustin helped organize the March on Washington in 1941.

Today, Wilberforce pays homage to this champion of racial, civil and gay rights through its Bayard Rustin Lecture Series, sponsored by Dominion Energy, established in 2017 by President Dr. Elfred Anthony Pinkard.

"The series was conceived as a way to acknowledge the life and legacy of Bayard Rustin as a pioneering human rights and

social justice advocate and unsung hero of the modern Civil Rights Movement," Pinkard says. "It was also established to remind students of the noteworthy individuals who have attended Wilberforce and to underscore Wilberforce's historic and contemporary imperative for social justice and social change."

The university brings in individuals known for thought-provoking dissertation or their activist roles in society. Students have the opportunity to engage in stimulating sessions that address current crises, like mental health. Previous speakers include Dr. David Marion, co-owner of a private mental health clinic serving clients in Alabama and Mississippi, and the national president of Omega Psi Fraternity, and local actor, writer and producer Felicia Chappelle. Additional Rustin speakers include Emmy-winning actor Robert Ri'chard and Jarrett Hill, a Los Angeles-based, award-winning journalist and media consultant.

Pinkard says Rustin's legacy is important, first because of his contributions to social justice, and also because his expulsion serves as a critical lesson to understand the value of informed and disciplined disruption when confronted by injustice, unfairness and the desire to make circumstances better.

"Bayard Rustin was a brilliant strategist and passionate human rights advocate and social change agent whose life and contributions are not widely known or appreciated," Pinkard says. "Given Wilberforce's continued interest in educating and shaping our students as disruptors, thought-leaders and social change agents, Bayard Rustin's life and legacy serve as a wonderfully appropriate model for this speaker series."

Pinkard says, if Rustin were alive today, he'd likely be "disappointed and aghast at the vitriol and uncivil rhetoric and behavior, but he would also be encouraged by the willingness of many young people to transcend differences and engage each other as members of one human family."

Future generations willing to treat others with respect and dignity are the building blocks for a more equitable America, and Pinkard says Rustin would be proud to see his former stomping grounds still exist as a vibrant intellectual and activist community in spite of the many challenges it has faced.

"He would celebrate the resilience of Wilberforce," he says, "And he would be excited and moved by young African American students engaging in thoughtful dialogue and action to address this nation's lingering social ills." ■

Making Up the Shortfall in Cleveland



IN PART ONE OF OUR NEW SERIES, WE LOOK AT HOW REMOTE WORK IS IMPACTING MUNICIPAL REVENUE (AND HOW THIS CAN BE ADDRESSED) IN CLEVELAND AND CUYAHOGA COUNTY

BY THE EDITORS

Before COVID-19 ever hit our nation's shores two years ago, the increased availability of online and electronic communications was making it easier for some employees to work at home, often removed from their employer's place of business, and often in our state's major metropolitan centers. Today, these major metropolitan centers are experiencing serious shortfalls in tax revenue due to remote working.

It's a situation that cannot be easily resolved but has to be addressed. And the issue can be complex even for professionals. The Ohio Society of CPAs has issued a 25-page report entitled "Municipal Income Tax Withholding & Refund Q & A Guide."

With the lifting of pandemic restrictions, it is apparent that workplace conditions have forever changed; there will be

many employees who will prefer to work remotely. And employers are all too willing, and even encouraging, the expansion of remote working and flextime arrangements for their employees.

The Ohio General Assembly recognized the problem early on, and enacted legislation to remain effective only during the pandemic emergency declared by our governor. This legislation authorized municipalities to continue to collect income taxes at their employers' places of business from employees who had been and were working remotely in 2020.

While the General Assembly dropped the provision from the recently enacted bill for refunds provided for taxes withheld in 2020, the issue of constitutionality of the prior provision authorizing municipalities to tax workers during the continuation of

the pandemic is still to be determined by current legislation. The budget bill now specifically authorizes refunds for taxes by remote workers during 2021.

However, the constitutionality of that legislation is being challenged in litigation brought against Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati and Toledo. The Ohio Senate, in its version of the biennial budget bill, is reported to be providing refunds for remote-working employees in the amount of income tax that has been withheld from their pay during the pandemic.

Whether by litigation or legislation, our state's major municipal centers, which are centers of employment of nonresidents, will be faced with millions of dollars of liability for income tax refunds.

So what can be done?

In the first of a three part series, *Ohio*



Gene Kramer

Business will address the issues surrounding remote work and municipal taxes in Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati, asking tax and human resources professionals in those communities for their insights for possible solutions.

Our immediate thanks is to Eugene L. Kramer, attorney at law, of Lakewood and Cleveland, for bringing this very important issue to our attention. The author of the current Cuyahoga County Charter and instrumental in writing and passage of the Summit County Charter approved by voters in 1979, Attorney Eugene Kramer has been practicing law for more than 57 years.

In addition to his focus on government and public policy, Kramer's extensive practice has included representation of and advice to numerous local, regional and state governments and agencies and

service as a municipal law director, as well as drafting of much of the state legislation providing for the levying of local optional taxes such as the county and regional transit authority sales and use taxes.

From Attorney Kramer:

"Now that cities are going to have to begin paying refunds and experiencing the loss of current revenue because of remote working, they are going to have to look to a solution for the enormous loss of income they will be experiencing.

"I have presented to quite a few people the solution of a countywide income tax that I told you about a while ago and have yet to hear from anyone why this solution will not work or any alternative solution. This problem will not go away when and if the pandemic ends or abates, since many people have come to enjoy and prefer

and to experience financial benefits from working remotely.

"As soon as more people begin to realize that any day spent working in Cleveland or other nonresident city costs them money, they will have an incentive to want to work from home even if that conflicts with the employer's needs or desires, thus setting up potential employment relations problems.

"Because Cuyahoga County has a charter form of government and its territory consists almost entirely of cities and villages, my proposed solution might currently be workable there. The only solution for the rest of the state that I can think of might be for the General Assembly to create some kind of 'piggyback' tax on top of the state income tax or to increase the state income tax in an amount sufficient to make up the lost revenue to the individual municipalities, which is probably not a likely outcome.

"Cleveland especially and the other employment centers in the county cannot withstand the loss of revenue and their ability to provide for necessary public services. The last thing Cleveland needs is a continuing deterrent to people coming into the city to work and to spend money.

"A countywide income tax could help to limit that effect. Under Article 10, Sections 3 and 4, of the Ohio Constitution, the voters of Cuyahoga County could amend the Cuyahoga County Charter to provide for the county to have exclusive authority to levy and collect an income tax in the county, which would replace all of the existing municipal income taxes in the county. The tax would be levied on the same incomes of businesses and individuals that now are taxed by the municipalities in the county. The county would not retain any of the revenue from



the tax and would contract with an agency such as CCA or RITA to administer and collect the tax.”

When could the proposed county charter amendment be submitted to the voters?

“County charter amendments may be submitted only at November general elections, so the earliest opportunity would be on November 8, 2022.”

What vote would be required for adoption of the proposed charter amendment?

“In this case, because the proposed charter amendment would involve giving exclusive municipal powers to the county, three separate majority affirmative votes would be required: (1) in the county at large, (2) in the city of Cleveland and (3) in the county outside the city of Cleveland.”

How would the countywide tax affect individuals?

“All income subject to municipal income taxation earned in the county would be taxed regardless of the residence of the taxpayer. Only a single tax return would have to be filed annually by persons who live and work in the county. The tax would be withheld from payrolls as in the current system. In the case of a county resident who earns income outside the county, a partial credit would be provided for income tax paid to a municipality outside the county.”

How would the countywide tax affect businesses?

“Business, regardless of the number of locations they operate in the county, would file a single tax return and pay a single tax amount. Business would continue to be required to withhold the income tax from payrolls.”

What would be the rate of the tax?

“The rate of the tax would be calculated as the amount estimated to be necessary to approximate the aggregate amount of municipal income tax proceeds realized by the combination of all of the municipalities in the county in 2019—the last full year before the onset of the pandemic.”

Could the county increase the rate of the countywide tax?

“The rate of the tax could be increased only with a vote of the people of the county. Under the current system, taxpayers cannot vote on the rate of the tax in the municipality where they work but do not live.”

How would the tax proceeds be distributed?

“Each municipality would receive a portion of the tax proceeds equal to the proportion of the total municipal tax proceeds collected in the county in 2019 that the municipality received in that year. That distribution formula could be altered only with the concurrence of a specified percentage (say, two-thirds) of the municipalities in the county.”

What other avenue is available for municipalities in the county to make up for revenue lost because of remote-working?

“A municipality could ask its residents to vote to increase the rate of the municipality’s existing tax rate in amount estimated to make up the difference.”

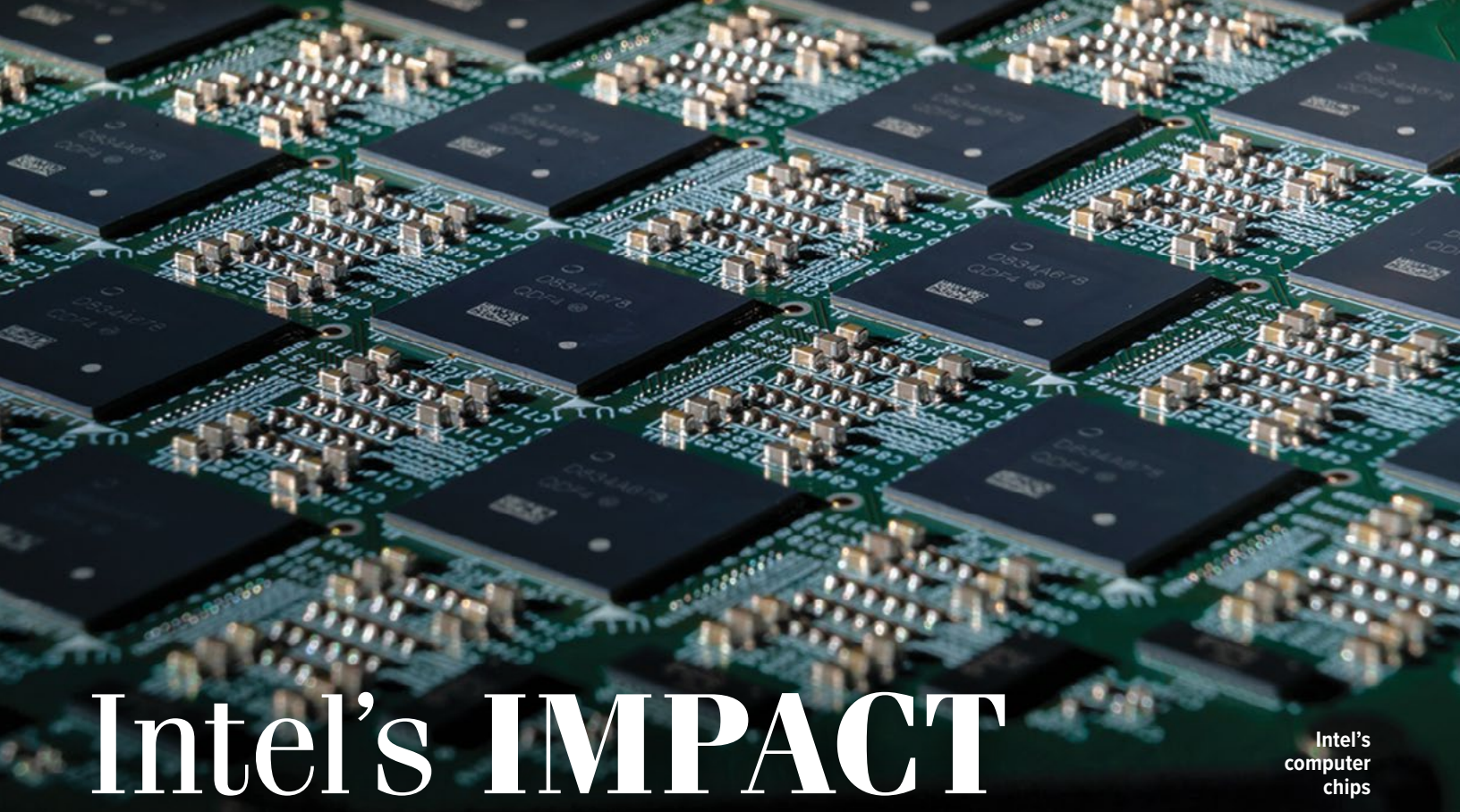
Wouldn’t it be unusual for a county to be able to levy an income tax?

“No Ohio county currently levies an income tax, but Cuyahoga County levies and collects countywide property, sales and use, motor vehicle license, real property transfer, and hotel taxes.”

What other effects would result from adoption of the plan?

“Continuation of the current situation will provide a significant financial incentive for nonresident employees who are able to do so to work remotely, regardless of their employer’s needs or wishes. Reduced working population in the employment centers negatively affects restaurants and other businesses that serve those employees.

“A single, countywide income tax would eliminate anticipated income tax revenues from job-producing developments as an incentive for municipalities in the county from engaging in competition for the location of such developments and the need for income-tax-sharing agreements in connection with the location or relocation of developments.” ■



Intel's IMPACT

Intel's
computer
chips

ARE THERE WINNERS AND LOSERS OF ITS RECENT OHIO ANNOUNCEMENT?

BY TERRY TROY

Whenever there is a business deal of this magnitude, there are winners and losers, the haves and have-nots. Fortunately, with this deal, there are very few losers.

The numbers, of course, are staggering.

Intel announced last month that it would initially invest \$20 billion in facilities in Central Ohio—the largest business investment in our state. Now, with the house passage of its portion for funding of the CHIPS Act, that investment could grow as high as \$100 billion.

The initial investment is going toward the construction of two state-of-the-art facilities in New Albany near Columbus. With it, Intel will create more than 10,000 jobs, return our nation to its status as a world force in microchip production and forever transform our state's economy.

Once considered among the top potato chip producing states in the nation, Ohio will soon become the leading state in terms of microchip production.

"Today's announcement is monumental news for the state of Ohio," Ohio

Gov. Mike DeWine said in making the announcement last month. "Intel's new facilities will be transformative for our state, creating thousands of good-paying jobs in Ohio manufacturing strategically vital semiconductors, often called 'chips.' Advanced manufacturing, research and development, and talent are part of Ohio's DNA, and we are proud that chips—which power the future—will be made in Ohio, by Ohioans."

Naturally, the folks at Intel were equally enthusiastic.

"Today's investment marks another significant way Intel is leading the effort to restore U.S. semiconductor manufacturing leadership," said Pat Gelsinger, CEO of Intel, during the same government/private industry love fest.

"Intel's actions will help build a more resilient supply chain and ensure reliable access to advanced semiconductors for years to come. Intel is bringing leading capability and capacity back to the United States to strengthen the global semiconductor industry. These factories will create a new epicenter for advanced chipmaking in the U.S. that will bolster Intel's domestic lab-to-fab pipeline and strengthen Ohio's leadership in research and high tech."

And there is no doubting the veracity of both of those statements by all accounts.

Indeed, they may have actually been modest in terms of the overall and long reaching impact of the announcement.

While the \$20 billion investment is the largest in our state's history, Gelsinger told Reuter's and other news outlets that the company's investment in Ohio could grow to the previously mentioned \$100 billion figure, which would include eight different facilities, turning the 1,000-acre site in New Albany into "the largest semiconductor manufacturing location on the planet," Gelsinger said.

That would be contingent on the passage of a legislative package that includes \$52 billion in incentives to locate chip production in the United States—which is well on its way. In June of 2021, the U.S. Senate passed the United States Innovation and Competition Act, which appropriates funds to finance the programs outlined in the CHIPS for America Act. The corresponding house legislation, the Democratic sponsored America COMPETES Act, passed the House of Representatives in early February by a 222 to 210 margin, strangely with the support of only one Republican and none from Ohio.

The recently passed House legislation is similar to a bill the U.S. Senate passed last summer. Now both the Senate and the House will have to agree on a compromise for it to become law—which is likely.

So why would the Republicans, even those representing our state's districts, be opposed to the bill?

You guessed it, the original version is loaded with all kinds of juicy "pork" projects, none of which are palatable to fiscal conservatives and none of which have anything to do with microchip production. The CHIPS Act, which was adopted last year, represents only \$52 billion of the total cost of the legislation, which is now around \$300 billion.

There are billions of dollars dedicated to Climate Change Resiliency programs, the creation of a Chief Manufacturing Officer within the White House as well as measures that some say will let China off the hook for corporate espionage, influence peddling on college campuses and military aggression. There have also been accusations that the bill might also funnel a lot of money toward Democratic-interest groups.

Right now, there's a lot of finger-pointing on both sides of the aisle. As of now, the issue is in something of a legislative limbo, although it is expected to eventually pass both the House and Senate, according to the Center for Strategic & International Studies. The stakes are just too high. And those pointing fingers at each other now will no doubt be slapping themselves on the back when the legislation finally goes forward. That's simply the nature of politics today.

Which brings us to a little bit of finger-pointing that's happening even at the local level.

As an organization, GROW Licking County does not comment on companies or conversations it is having on economic development projects with other compa-

nies that are considering locating to the area. However, there will likely be an influx of Intel suppliers to the region.

Alexis Fitzsimmons, executive director of GROW Licking County, says "the impacts of this project will be far reaching and will include changes and evolving needs in workforce education, housing, transit and infrastructure in our region. We will need to work as a region to address all of these opportunities and to make sure that our communities are prepared."

She cites what happened when Intel located in Chandler, Arizona, in the early 1980s. The suburb of Phoenix went from having a population of 30,000 in 1980 to having more than 240,000 folks within its borders today. The economic footprint also changed, growing from an agricultural base to one of manufacturing and electronics.

That kind of profound sociological change can have a dramatic impact on a local community. Just days after Intel's announcement, the trustees of Jersey Township (where the land for the Intel development is currently located) issued a press release. While acknowledging that the development is "much needed" for the ongoing security of our country, the release also recognized the economic impact on the local, state, federal and worldwide economies. But the trustees seemed a little taken back on how the deal transpired.

"New Albany Company, as you know by now, has been buying land in Jersey Township and doing a lot of negotiating land purchases for the new Intel site," the release stated. "The trustees found out last September that some of the residents had been approached to sell their land and wanted to know what was going on.

"First of all, we were never informed by an accurate source or given reliable information that could be verified with any validity as to what the large land acquisition was to be used for. There were plenty of rumors surfacing, but no one would tell us exactly what might be happening, so everything we heard was truly speculative until Friday (the time of the announcement) at the press release held in Newark."

The release further stated that the only negotiations that were held with New Albany Municipality were to achieve a 50% tax abatement, not a 100% tax abatement.

"We were never informed by New Albany Company or Municipality or any other reliable source what the land acquisition was to be used for," to quote the release.

Basically, an organization called the New Albany Company buys property in Jersey Township, then petitions New Albany Municipality to annex the land—something the trustees of Jersey Township are unable to stop.

"New Albany is a strategically-planned community, and this project fits within the parameters of our business park, where 16,000 people already work," said Sloan Spalding, New Albany's mayor, in a prepared statement. "We've been planning roads and other critical infrastructure for years, and with assistance from our other project partners, we will ensure that the infrastructure for this project will be in place in a way that supports our entire community."

Josh Poland, public information officer for New Albany, clarified its position with Jersey Township.

"Both the township and the city approved the annexation agreement, but no



Intel's proposed site for two microchip manufacturing facilities



Governor Mike DeWine and Pat Gelsinger at Intel's announcement in January.

annexation has taken place yet," Poland says. "We shared as much concrete information about the project as we could with the trustees. We told them from the beginning that this would be an extension of the business park. The terms of the agreement reflect that.

"Between our master plan, our experience at the business park and the groundwork laid for this project already, this facility will fit well within the parameters of the New Albany International Business Park and our community. New Albany residents will benefit significantly from this project. Increased income tax revenue will provide funds to maintain a high level of city services, parks and leisure trails, and infrastructure."

"You must understand that the majority of the people who live in the township have lived here for years and do so because they want to live in the country," answers Dan Wetzel, chairman of the board of trustees for Jersey Township. "With the Intel economic impact, it will destroy the country look and feel.

"We have residents that were never given the opportunity to be bought out and have been left in the middle of the development area and some that border right up against it. Obviously, these residents are not jumping with joy.

"We do have residents that are very hap-

py and were the ones that were asked to sell out and most of them are becoming very wealthy overnight. So, as I stated, when annexation happens to this magnitude it creates happy and unhappy individuals."

Wetzel went on to cite such issues as an acceleration of property values and subsequent taxes, increases in traffic, light pollution at night and the noise and dust from construction as areas of concern.

"I do not see any real value for the people who live close to the industrial area. It will no doubt cause inflation to accelerate property values, which produces higher property taxes. And then, without consideration for location of some house's right in the middle of the area to be developed, these values will undoubtedly go down in regard to residential living. The amount of traffic being created will become a factor.

"The two-lane country roads in this area are to become six lanes," Wetzel adds. "We will have to create more housing, which means more families, which means more schools, which means more taxes to pay for those schools. The immediate area to be impacted will not be good. However, if you look at it from a different perspective from far away the economic impact will be great."

That includes the creation of jobs and increased revenue for New Albany as well as the state. However, "the township will

receive a small amount since we were able to obtain only 50% tax abatement, and most of all the country can get all the semi-conductors and chips needed within the next 10 years.

"It also must be noted that this will end up being very possibly the largest economic development project in the history of Ohio," adds Poland. "This project [is] so much bigger than New Albany. It's a key to our region and state, and the more than 100 Ohio businesses, which are already Intel partners. There were protocols that needed to be followed throughout this project to ensure that Ohio would remain on the list of sites to be considered, and attracting Intel was a partnership effort on every level of local, regional and state government. This was a huge win for our state, and for consumers across our country who have been negatively impacted by the shortage of chips."

"Really at the end of the day Jersey Township and its residents will have to take one for the team," says Wetzel. "I would hope that the governor's office will step up to the plate here and start communicating with the township so we can create an economic impact report to help determine how to create a new Comprehensive Plan and make the necessary zoning changes to protect the people who are left here to deal with this impact." ■



OHIO SUCCESS AWARDS

BY THE EDITORS

Presented by *Ohio Business Magazine*, the fourth annual Ohio Success Awards honors growth companies, nonprofits and governmental organizations across the state of Ohio. The Ohio Success Awards recognizes the accomplishments of companies that have demonstrated growth in revenue and employees, as well as having demonstrated involvement in their community and service in their industry; nonprofits that have made a significant impact upon the communities they serve; and governmental organizations that have created unique value or opportunities based upon their ingenuity, partnership and perseverance.

This year's winners were able to succeed in the last year despite the many challenges they faced. We asked this year's winners what led to their success, and a selection of their responses can be found on the following pages.

To celebrate this year's winners, *Ohio Business Magazine* plans to host a celebratory event soon. If you're interested in learning more, subscribe to the Ohio Business newsletter at OhioBusinessMag.com to say up-to-date on all event news.

NOMINATION PROCESS

For the 2022 Ohio Success Awards, a nomination form was emailed to businesses throughout the state, inviting them to self-nominate. A form was also posted online so that other businesses could participate. For-profit, nonprofit and government institutions were able to self-nominate. Nominees were asked to provide information on topics such as their revenue starting in 2018, company size starting in 2019, approximate profitability and revenue and profit projections. The winners were then selected by committee and had to show growth in one or more of these categories. If you are interested in nominating your company next year, subscribe to the *Ohio Business Magazine* and newsletter (both of which are complimentary), at OhioBusinessMag.com.

PRIVATE COMPANIES

Name	Business	Location	Top Executive	Year Founded	2020 Revenue	2018 Revenue	2021 Employees	2019 Employees
Air Force One, Inc.	HVAC contractor and commercial mechanical services provider	Dublin	Greg Guy, CEO	1984	\$25-49 Million	\$25-49 Million	341	213
AtNetPlus	IT managed service provider specializing in business consulting and cybersecurity	Stow	Jay Mellon, CEO	1998	\$5-9 Million	\$1-4 Million	38	30
Barnes Dennig	Certified public accounting and consulting firm	Cincinnati	Jay Rammes, Managing Director	1965	\$25-49 Million	\$10-24 Million	180	150
Black Bull Capital Partners	Financial planning and stock trading firm	Cincinnati	Bryan J. Clifton, President	2019	Less than \$1 Million	N/A	22	0
CAPTRUST - Akron Location	Institutional retirement plan advisory office	Akron	J. Fielding Miller, CEO	2009	\$5-9 Million	\$1-4 Million	6	4
CHAATRIK Architecture	Architecture and design firm	Liberty Township	Jaipal Singh, Principal	2017	Less than \$1 Million	Less than \$1 Million	7	1
Cincinnati School of Music	Music education	Cincinnati	Anna Backer, Director	2012	Less than \$1 Million	Less than \$1 Million	53	5
Custom Design Benefits	Independent, full-service third party administrator of self-funded health plans	Cincinnati	Julie D. Mueller, President & CEO	1991	\$5-9 Million	\$5-9 Million	68	75
E4:28 Staffing	Nonprofit that employs individuals with felony convictions	Cincinnati	Meaghan Davis, CEO	2020	\$1-4 Million	Less than \$1 Million	881	0
Elite Biomedical Solutions	Medical equipment manufacturer	Cincinnati	Jeff Smith, CEO	2012	\$10-24 Million	\$10-24 Million	47	43
Evan's Auto Care	Auto repair	Cincinnati	Evan Brodof, Owner	1964	\$1-4 Million	\$1-4 Million	11	8
Fahlgren Mortine	Integrated communications	Columbus	Neil Mortine, CEO	1962	\$10-24 Million	\$25-49 Million	188	178
Fleet Response	Specialized auto third party administrator	Hudson	Scott Mawaka, President & CEO	1986	\$100-249 Million	\$100-249 Million	200	175
I Hear Music, Inc.	Gospel music promotions and marketing company	Mason	Tracey Artis, CEO	2001	Less than \$1 Million	Less than \$1 Million	5	3
Lily's Dayton	Restaurant	Dayton	Emily Mendenhall, General Manager	2013	\$1-4 Million	\$1-4 Million	25	20
Lithko Contracting, LLC	Concrete contractor	West Chester	Robert Strobel, President & CEO	1994	\$750-999 Million	\$500-749 Million	3,200	1,900
M Genio	Custom Software development firm with a focus on mobile, cloud and IoT	Cleveland	Jacob Glenn, President	2012	\$1-4 Million	\$1-4 Million	10	5
Mid-American Financial Group	Residential and commercial mortgage brokerage	Cincinnati	Duy Vu, President	2004	\$1-4 Million	\$1-4 Million	8	12
Mills James	Video and event production company	Columbus	Cameron James, CEO	1984	\$10-24 Million	\$25-49 Million	177	161
Minerva Dairy	Multi-generation, family-owned creamery	Minerva	Venae Watts and Adam Mueller, Co-owners	1894	\$25-49 Million	\$25-49 Million	50	30
Oswald Companies	Insurance and risk management	Cleveland	Robert J. Klonk, Chairman & CEO	1893	\$100-249 Million	\$50-99 Million	390	395
Peak Productivity	Business coaching	Maineville	Elisabeth Wilson Galperin, Owner	2007	Less than \$1 Million	Less than \$1 Million	1	1
Sapphire Creek Operating Company	Restaurant and event center	Chagrin Falls	Kathleen Birkel Dangelo, President	2018	\$1-4 Million	\$1-4 Million	45	30
Software Solutions, Inc.	Software developer for local government and utilities	Dayton	Al Ferguson, CEO	1978	\$10-24 Million	\$5-9 Million	59	47
Spider Logistics	Third party logistics	Cincinnati	Jeff Campbell, President	2018	Less than \$1 Million	Less than \$1 Million	5	3
State and Federal Communications, Inc.	Compliance registration and reporting	Akron	Elizabeth Z. Bartz, President & CEO	1993	\$5-9 Million	\$5-9 Million	39	38
Stratton Mortgage, LLC	Mortgages	Dublin	Adam Baumlein, President	2019	\$1-4 Million	\$1-4 Million	8	6
Superior Dental Care	Group dental benefits	Centerville	Rick Chircosta, Chairman, President & CEO of Medical Mutual	1986	\$100-249 Million	\$50-99 Million	47	52

NONPROFITS/GOVERNMENT

Being successful means more than increasing revenue and employees—it also can mean making an impact. These nonprofits and governmental institutions demonstrated exceptional impact upon the communities they serve.

Name	Business	Location	Top Executive	Year Founded
Amberley Village	Village government and public services	Cincinnati	Scot Lahrmer, Village Manager	1940
Adult Advocacy Centers	Nonprofit that works to improve access and equity for adult crime victims with disabilities	Columbus	Katherine Yoder, Executive Director	2019
Allied Construction Industries (ACI)	Trade association serving Cincinnati region's commercial construction industry	Cincinnati	Jordan Vogel, Executive Director	1929
Aullwood Audubon	Nature sanctuary and educational farm	Dayton	Alexis R. Faust, Executive Director	1957
Cincinnati State Technical and Community College	Higher education and workforce development	Cincinnati	Dr. Monica Posey, President	1969
Countryside YMCA	Nonprofit fitness club that offers preschool outreach, disease prevention programs, swim lessons and more	Lebanon	Chris Johnson, President & CEO	1978
Dayton Christian School	Private PK-12 school	Dayton	Dr. John Gredy, Head of School	1963
European American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Cincinnati	Chamber of commerce	Cincinnati	Todd P. Schwartz, executive director	2007
Goodwill Easterseals Miami Valley	Nonprofit that empowers people with disabilities and other disadvantages to achieve independence and improve their quality of life	Dayton	Lance W. Detrick, President & CEO	1934
Lifebanc	Organ procurement organization	Cleveland	Gordon Bowen, CEO	1986
Magnified Giving	Educational organization that engage students in philanthropy	Cincinnati	Roger Grein, President	2008
Matthew 25: Ministries	Nonprofit that provides basic necessities and disaster relief	Cincinnati	Tim Mettey, CEO	1991
Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries	Employment and training organization	Cincinnati	Joseph S. Byrum, President & CEO	1916
Princeton City Schools	School district	Cincinnati	Tom Burton, Superintendent	1955
Professional Flair Inc (Dancing Wheels Company & School)	Not-for-profit arts and disability organization	Cleveland	Mary Verdi-Fletcher, President	1980
Riverside Research	Not-for-profit organization chartered to advance scientific research for the benefit of the US government and in the public interest	Beavercreek	Dr. Steven Omick, President & CEO	1967
Rosemary's Babies Co.	Teen parent and family support organization	Cincinnati	Rosemary Oglesby-Henry, CEO	2016
Saint Ursula Academy	Private Catholic high school for girls in grades 9-12	Cincinnati	Lelia Keefe Kramer, President	1910
Seeds of Literacy	Adult basic education	Cleveland	Bonnie Entler, President & CEO	1997
Taft Museum of Art	Art Museum	Cincinnati	Deborah Emont Scott, President & CEO	1932
The New Path, Inc.	Human service nonprofit agency	Tipp City	William Lutz, Executive Director	2000



Scot Lahrmer,
Amberley Village Manager



Amberley Village
CINCINNATI



Barnes Dennig
CINCINNATI

Increased Revenues by 7%
Increased Employees by 10%

“Love how this award recognizes growth and innovation—and the value we’re able to bring to our clients. We’re more than an accounting firm—we’re helping our clients build their futures. But it’s much more than that; our team needs to be happy and successful with great work-life balance. Technology is great, but it makes life harder, too, so working to address that. Public accounting is challenging, but so rewarding—you go into it because you love it and you want to make a difference. And we want to make that difference for our team as well as our clients.”

– Jay Rammes, CPA, MBA, Managing Director

Allied Construction Industries (ACI)
CINCINNATI

Increased Revenues by 10%





CHAATRIK Architecture
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP

Increased Revenues by 300%
Increased Employees, from 1 to 7

"I attribute all success to having a successful mindset. I believe the universe hears your innermost fears just as strong as your desires, so I make sure to have my priorities in place! At CHAATRIK Architecture, we believe in building a better world, which requires focus on every project and attention to every client. Through the pandemic, we have been adaptive and nimble to improve our operations and processes. Through the warm embrace of technology, we stay innovative to ensure our entire team is connected, informed, supported and inspired. And it helps to design some pretty cool buildings." - Jaipal Singh, AIA, Principal Architect

Dayton Christian School
DAYTON

Increased Revenues by 13%
Increased Employees, from 100 to 120





European American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Cincinnati
CINCINNATI

Increased Revenues by 150%
Increased Employees by 33%



Fahlgren Mortine
COLUMBUS

Increased Revenues by 20%
Increased Employees, from 178 to 188



Evan's Auto Care
CINCINNATI
Increased Revenues by 10%
Increased Employees from 8 to 11



Cincinnati School of Music
CINCINNATI

Increased Revenues by 20%
Increased Employees by 20%



M Genio Inc.
CLEVELAND

Increased Revenues by 10%

Increased Employees, from 5 to 10

“Our success in 2021 was a direct result of the cultural foundation we’ve built over the years. If you treat your people right, challenge them with interesting work, and have a culture that provides a collaborative and supportive environment, then the success is just an inevitable result.” - Jacob Glenn, Founder & President

Peak Productivity
MAINEVILLE

Increased Revenues by 25%



Oswald Companies
CLEVELAND

Increased Revenues by 10%



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Rosemary's Babies Co.

CINCINNATI

Increased Revenues by 300%

Increased Employees, from 1 to 2

“Rosemary’s Babies Co. wants to be known as a ‘Best In Class’ resource. The most important factor behind our business and our success is ‘Rosemary’s babies,’ the families we serve. Our mission is to help these teen parents master the concepts of self-leadership to leave a legacy. Team RBC does this by being intentional in our efforts to live, work and lead by example. Our beliefs and values were core to our growth in 2021, sustainability and long-term impact. Our guiding beliefs: Integrity, Respect, Transparency, Leadership and Equity.”

- Rosemary Oglesby-Henry, CEO/founder



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Increased Employees, from 137 to 141



**Goodwill Easterseals Miami Valley
DAYTON**

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CLEVELAND

Increased Revenues by 10%

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- Bonnie Entler, President & CEO

OSA Profile

Princeton City School District



Princeton High School students have the opportunity to earn a Work Ethic Certificate upon graduation. The Certificate is earned by displaying eight measurable standards and demonstrating sound work ethic, based on practical industry standards using a data-driven matrix.

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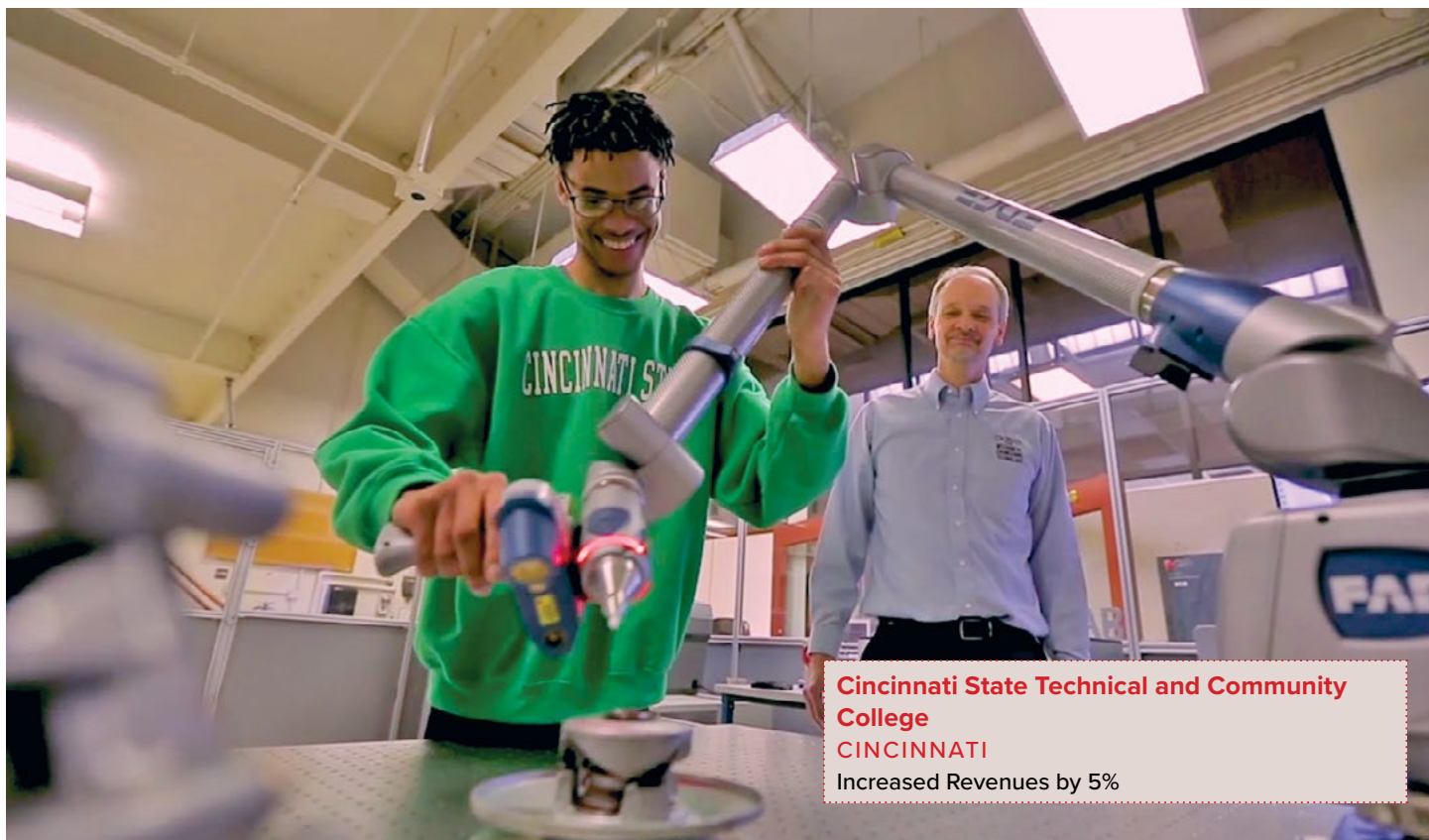
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**Taft Museum of Art
CINCINNATI**

Increased Employees, from 46 to 64

“The Taft has continued to thrive during the past year thanks to our devoted donors and members, our passionate audience and especially our dedicated and collaborative team of staff and volunteers who have helped the Taft Museum of Art thrive. As we celebrate the museum’s 90th birthday, it is thanks to this team that the Taft will have a fruitful next era, remaining Cincinnati’s special place for art, history, programs and more.

During the pandemic, the museum published Highlights from the Collection, refreshed the website and brand, evolved into online and hybrid experiences for audiences, and digitalized almost 100 highlights from the collection—now available to the public on the Taft’s website. The largest team effort of all was launching the Bicentennial Infrastructure Project to preserve and protect the Taft historic house. Supported by the Love This House campaign, the Taft is now 80% of the way to our goal of \$12.7 million to complete the needed work for the 200-year-old-home.”

– Deborah Emont Scott,
Louise Taft Semple President/CEO



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OSA Profile

The New Path, Inc.

The New Path, Inc., serves residents in Miami County with their basic needs. Most notably, our organization operates two food pantries, in Tipp City and Piqua, and we also lend out medical supplies through our GIVE Medical Ministry in Covington. Our organization also provides emergency financial assistance for all residents in Miami County.

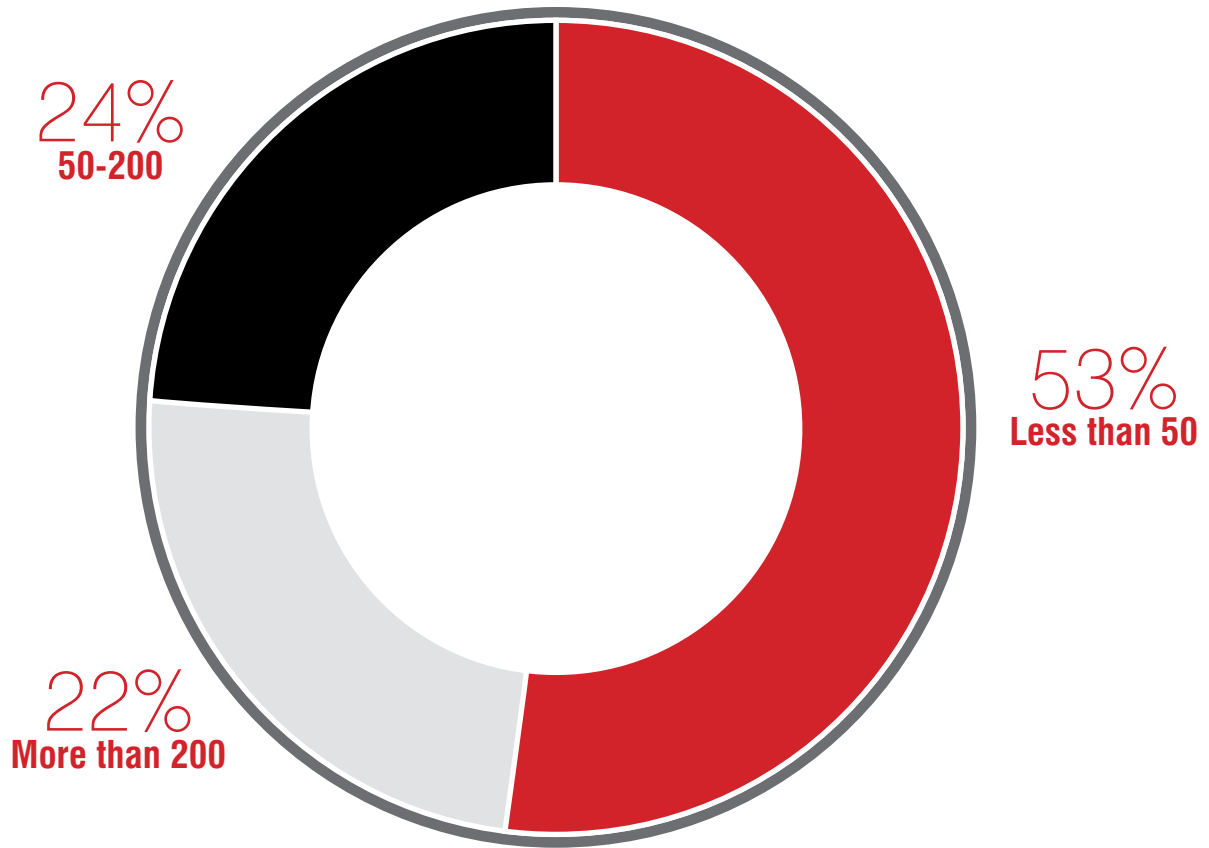
What makes our organization unique is we have two stores that support our efforts. Both stores sell gently used furniture, household goods and clothing. We have also started a food delivery program for those that are homebound.

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*Data was retrieved in May 2021 from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Education Database (IPEDS). Includes 2019-2020 data for universities in Ohio with at least 50% of their student population aged 25 and older.

A young man with glasses and a beard, wearing a purple polo shirt, is sitting at a desk in a modern office or library setting. He is looking down at a laptop computer, which is open in front of him. There is an open book on the desk to the left of the laptop. Large windows in the background show a cityscape.

A Bluffton student
doing work online

At-Home Higher Education

OHIO COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ARE MORE ACCESSIBLE THAN EVER THANKS TO ONLINE AND HYBRID PROGRAMS

BY CORINNE MINARD

Working adults may want to go back to school for multiple reasons—career advancement, a possible field change and even the love of knowledge are all on the list. But just as there are many reasons to earn a degree, there are just as many, if not more, obstacles, in working adults' way. From proximity and access to the cost and time commitment, these obstacles can seem insurmountable.

Ohio colleges and universities see the demand, though, and are doing their part to make it easier than ever for working adults to earn a degree with their online and hybrid programs. These aren't your grandparents' correspondents' courses—

these are flexible, interactive online classes that can help students earn a degree or certificate and connect with other like-minded adults. Whether you're looking to complete a degree, go to law school or earn your master's in business administration, Ohio institutions of higher learning have got you covered with their online programs.

BLUFFTON UNIVERSITY

Bluffton University, a small, private, liberal arts university in Bluffton, Ohio, that, as a residential university, normally requires its undergraduate students to live on or within 50 miles of campus. But with its online programs, adults from throughout Ohio can complete their degree, earn their master's in education or earn their MBA from their own homes. Bluffton says its MBA program is the most affordable in the state of Ohio (according to discover-business.us).

Depending on the program, students attend a live online class once or twice a

week with their classmates. The rest of the week, students are expected to complete the work on their own time, which gives working adults the flexibility they may need to complete the course.



Shelby Koenig, the enrollment counselor for Adult and Graduate Studies at Bluffton, has seen firsthand how the program has enabled working adults to further their education. In addition to recruiting for the program, she's also enrolled in the online 22-month MBA program herself.

"We obviously promote higher education, so I just wanted to better myself, go back to school and get that master's degree," she says.

She's particularly enjoyed the ways she's been able to connect with the other students in the program. "I've met people from all different ages, backgrounds and career paths," she says. "You really get to know folks. I would've never had the opportunity to meet these people because some of these people are a few hours away from where I live."

And because she's part of the online MBA program, she can easily dispel some of the myths people have about online education. "I share stories about people that I know personally that have made it work. They just really have to dig in deep and rely on other family, friends and such to take care of their kids if they want to have this advancement."

UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI

Founded in 1906, the Carl H. Lindner College of Business at the University of Cincinnati has long offered master's programs in a residential setting. But in recent years, the college has also dedicated itself to creating quality online programs that work for working adults' schedules, with *U.S. News & World Report* ranking its online MBA program as No. 2 in Ohio and *Fortune Magazine* naming it the 17th best in the country.

"One of the things we tried to do here with our online programs is all of our online programs are structured as asynchronous online," says Steve Slezak, associate dean of Academic Programs at Lindner. "You don't have to meet at a particular time. All of the lecture content is in videos that you can view at your own pace."

Lindner students have access to a variety of online master's degrees—from the master's in health administration to a master's in business analytics, in addition to an MBA—as well as online graduate certificates. However, Slezak says what really separates Lindner from other colleges is its faculty.

"Unlike some online programs that sort of get teachers for hire, the faculty



Steve Slezak

that teaches in our residential program, these are the same faculty that teach in our online programs. They're the same people that are doing research. They're the same people that are in partnerships with corporations, the same ones that are doing all of the work on what revisions we have to do to the curriculum," he says.

This gives online students access to the same quality education as those who attend in-person classes.

"We try and treat them the same way we treat our residential students," says Jeffrey Franke, assistant dean of Graduate Programs at Lindner. "We don't see it as continuing education. We see it as a different modality of the way we offer our degree program. They're still structured programs, the same high quality, the same rigor."

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

In August 2019, the University of Dayton School of Law launched one of the first accredited hybrid Juris Doctor programs in the country.

"The impetus for this was a couple fold," says Andrew L. Strauss, dean and professor at the School of Law. "One is that in terms of expanding access to legal education, a tremendous number of people are being left out of the ability to go to law school right now because if you're not within commuting distance of a law school and you're not in a position to pick up and move, you can't go to law school.

"But then there's also people whose whole lifestyles don't really allow them to go," he says, such as those who work full-time or have family commitments.

To make the program accessible without sacrificing quality, half of the students' hours each week are asynchronous while the other half are live. Interactivity has also been built into both the asynchronous and live classes, with students being asked to participate by answering questions or addressing prompts.

"The idea of law school that I think most of us in legal education ascribe to is that law should be interactive," says Strauss. "You can't just listen to somebody tell you it, you have to play around with the ideas yourself."

Though the program is mostly online, there is an in-person component as well. Students are asked to visit the campus once a semester most semesters for what is called a "Get REAL" weekend. During that weekend, students get to meet their professors and fellow students in person and attend classes.

"There are some people that think you can't do law school online," adds Strauss. "I think what we're showing is that you clearly can and that in fact law school really lends itself well to online." ■



Andrew Strauss

Bengals Bring Bucks

“WHO DEY THINK GONNA BEAT DEM DOLLARS”

BY TERRY TROY



Talk about pent up demand. It's easy to understand why the average Bengals' fan was so excited about this year's Super Bowl. It's also easy to see why even those remotely interested in football throughout our state were on pins and needles during the game.

After all, the last time the Bengals were in the Super Bowl, the average price of a new car was \$10,400, the average rent \$420 a month. A pound of pork chops would run you 40 cents. Things were certainly a lot different back in 1988.

The Bengals didn't win, but the city of Cincinnati received plenty of national coverage during the lead up to the big game.

According to published reports, the Bengals got 127,000 mentions in January alone—more than nine times the exposure the team had last January—reaching some 22.6 million people. That kind of exposure would cost in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

Now, civic organizations like REDI Cincinnati, the Cincinnati USA Convention

and Visitors Bureau and the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber are already reaching out to convention planners, many of whom might not have even thought of Cincinnati as a possibility before.

And hundreds of small businesses across the Tri-state area are already benefitting from increased crowds and brisk sales. And that's a fact that's as money as, well, Money Mac.

Witness the local bars that pulled in huge crowds for game days across the season. Now think about the sales of Bengals apparel. Official merchandise partners struggled to keep jerseys and souvenirs on their shelves—and it's not from supply chain disruptions. Indeed, stores reported mobs of customers after the team's win over the Chiefs, comparing everyday crowds to those they see once a year on Black Fridays.

The most immediate impact was felt over Super Bowl weekend, as Bengals fans from around the region flooded into town to witness the historic Super Bowl appearance. In the two weeks leading up to the game, an advertising campaign, a collaboration between the Cincinnati USA Convention & Visitors Bureau and MeetNKY, was implemented to reach out to those regional fans.

“The Cincy region has come together to make sure this is an exciting weekend for visitors and residents alike to celebrate the historic season,” said Julie Calvert,

president and CEO of the Cincinnati USA CVB, in the lead up to the game. “There are many options, from family activities to special Bengals tailgates, themed food and beverages, and more. Visitors can celebrate the Super Bowl and Valentine's Day in one exciting destination.”

Indeed, VisitCincy.com even coordinated a Super Bowl guide outlining event details and direct links to hotels and other attractions.

So what's the bottom line?

While many experts and sports economists caution city officials and taxpayers that the economic impact of a Super Bowl visit is often overstated, it should be a big enough jolt to boost the region's economy by somewhere in the neighborhood of \$460 million, according to several published reports.

That's not exactly chump change.

So regardless of how Cool Joe Burrow and the Bengals performed, all the communities of Southwest Ohio, Northern Kentucky and the entire Greater Cincinnati region are already winners.

It's been long-awaited and overdue.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry Troy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



Cincinnati State

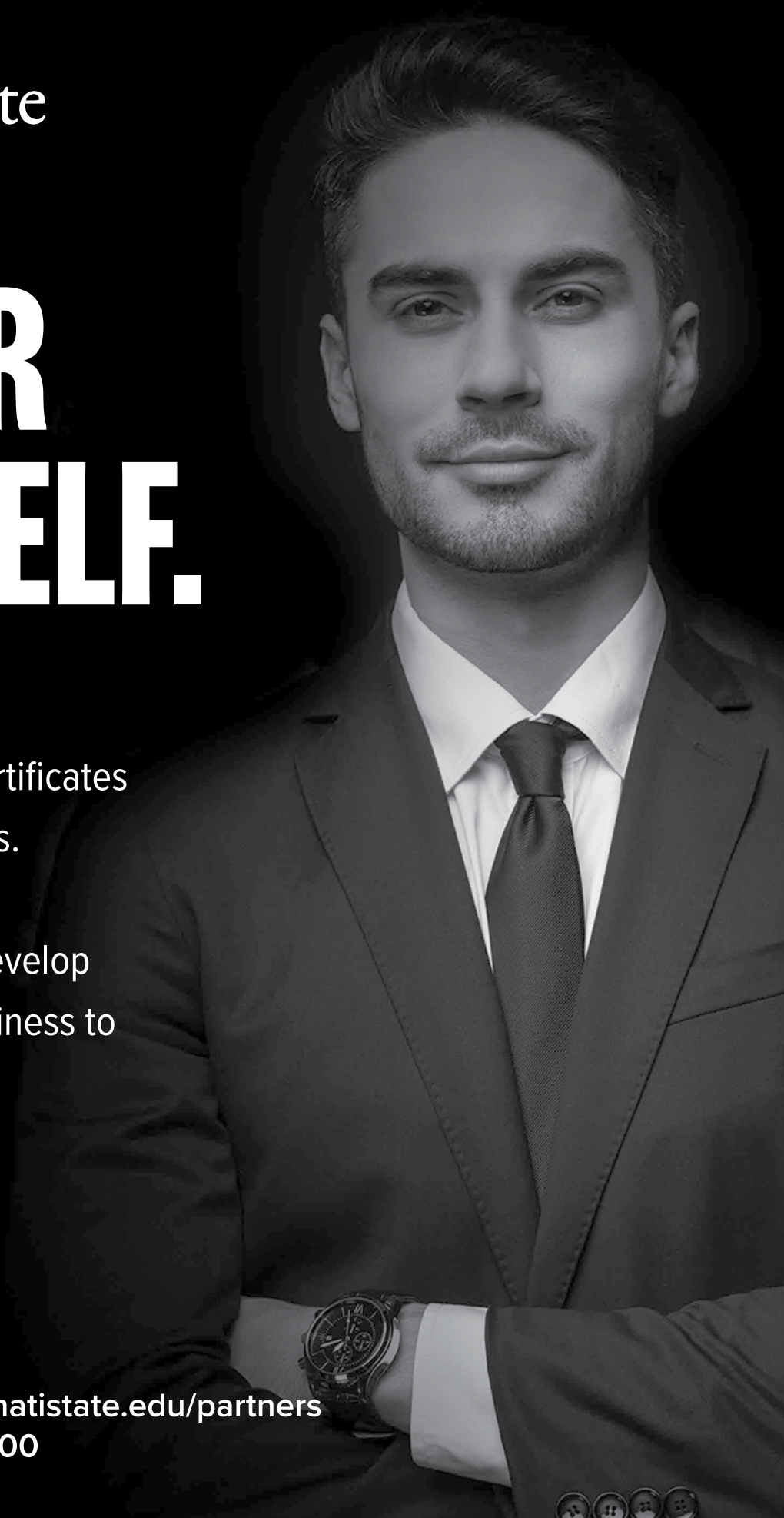
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