

The PRO Report

EDA's Philadelphia Regional Office Monthly Newsletter

June 11, 2008

Message from the Regional Director

EDA's Core Mission
To lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American Regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy



Greetings, I am pleased to welcome you to the inaugural addition of the PRO Report, the dynamic new monthly publication of the Philadelphia Regional Office (PRO) of the Economic Development Administration. The primary goal of *The PRO Report* is to create a better-informed network of regional partners by providing relevant news and

updates from the field, the regional office, and EDA leadership in Washington, DC.

The PRO Report will achieve this goal by

- Delivering specialized information to our partners about the Philadelphia Region of EDA
- Highlighting successful projects within the Region
- Providing a forum for information exchange regarding the important work in which PRO and its partners are engaged

The title of this publication, *The PRO Report*, is a play on words intending to represent 1) the acronym of the Philadelphia Regional Office, *PRO* 2) The *PRO*fessional level of service that Philadelphia Regional Office staff strives to provide to the agency and to our partners on a consistent basis, and 3) the fact that you, our partners in the districts and regions that we serve, are *PRO*s at developing and transforming your economies and we appreciate your expertise.

I hope that you find the information presented in *The PRO Report* germane to your work in regional economic development. I look forward to meeting as many of our region's partners as possible in the coming months and to working with you on projects that strengthen the United States economy and bolster the competitiveness of your region.

Sincerely,

Willie C. Taylor

Willie C. Taylor
Regional Director
Philadelphia Regional Office
Economic Development Administration

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Program Review: Revolving Loan Fund

RLF Automation Project

When the automated RLF system is activated, there will no longer be a need for paper progress reports

On May 23, the national RLF team saw the latest version of the web-based RLF reporting and management system. The national RLF team is composed of Headquarters RLF personnel and the RLF administrator in each regional office.

The demonstration was impressive. When the system is activated in late summer, the need for paper progress reports will end. RLF operators will be able to download their pertinent records directly into the web-based data system for their initial report in October. Thereafter, the operators will provide the system only with updates. The system also will do all calculations, eliminating math errors. From the EDA RLF administrators' perspective, the system will eliminate all data entry requirements, will automatically issue late notices to non-reporting RLF operators, and will flag any RLF with a report that contains data which indicates non-compliance with EDA's requirements. We will be able to concentrate our efforts on those RLFs that are out of compliance, which will save considerable man hours of work currently spent on house keeping and data entry. The RLF web-based reporting system promises to be a major improvement in RLF administration.

Training for EDA personnel and for RLF operators is scheduled to begin by mid-summer 2008.

PRO Partners with USEAC on Export Trade

The Philadelphia Regional Office of EDA will be working closely with the International Trade Administration's (ITA) Philadelphia U.S. Export Assistance Center (USEAC) over the next five months. Tony Ceballos, the Director of the Philadelphia U.S. Export Assistance Center, joined EDA's Philadelphia Regional Office on May 19th of 2008 and will work with PRO until mid October.

Mr. Ceballos is a candidate of the Department of Commerce's 2008 Executive Leadership Development Program. Mr. Ceballos' participation in this program allows for him to complete a short-term assignment away from his home agency of ITA; he chose to work with EDA.

Mr. Ceballos' assignment will focus on developing new insights and designs on economic development which are consistent with the EDA's long term interest to promote growth in a global environment through the following:

- 1) Evaluating Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) to identify areas to include international development programs that would encourage entrepreneurship, create new jobs, and open new markets for local companies in distressed areas.
- 2) Revising CEDS to include programmatic changes where USEACs can be of assistance for EDA to make strategic linkages to the global market.
- 3) Piloting an outreach strategy incorporating new types of development which fully utilizes the region's unique industry advantages to maximize economic opportunity in compatible markets overseas.
- 4) Leveraging international business development resources of other Commerce bureaus within ITA to deliver solutions and programs that help U.S. companies succeed in the global marketplace in order to maintain America's economic competitive edge.

This year, EDA expanded its funding priorities to include initiatives that Connect Regional Economies with the Worldwide Marketplace. EDA has a federal partnership with ITA focused on helping America compete in the Worldwide economy.



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Project Profile: Trenton, NJ

Blueprint for Success in Trenton Brownfield Redevelopment

On Wednesday May 21st, four team members of the Philadelphia Regional Office witnessed Trenton taking an important step toward bringing back manufacturing jobs to the city. Trenton, in partnership with a Hunterdon County developer, announced plans to transform the site of a long-vacant Carter Wallace factory into a productive industrial center.

The city demolished the former factory in 2004, used EDA money appropriated for Hurricane Floyd mitigation to remove petroleum and polluted soil, and now J.G. Petrucci Co. plans to build two light industrial buildings totaling more than 100,000 square feet where two to four tenants will employ from 80 to 100 people.

This site is part of a larger EDA-funded investment to clean-up and vacate flood-prone industrial parcels and develop new industrial parcels which are safe from flood hazards.

The project has several components:

- Petrucci will construct two buildings, each approximately 54,000 square feet.
- The buildings and parking lot will serve as a cap on the remediated land, whose cleanup and ongoing monitoring has been accomplished using part of a \$6 million grant from the Economic Development Administration.
- Enterprise Avenue will be moved 15 feet closer to the creek, and sidewalks, trees and lighting will be installed on each side of the avenue.
- A greenway, including landscaping, a paved path and retaining wall, will be constructed along the creek. The long-range plan is to link this new greenway with the Delaware & Raritan Canal.



PRO Team onsite in Trenton with City and County Government Representatives.

There are other financial incentives for Petrucci and the future tenants because the site is in an Urban Enterprise Zone. The cost of building materials is exempt from the state sales tax, there is a 50 percent reduction in unemployment insurance taxes, and there are up to \$1,500 in credits against the N.J. Corporation Business Tax for hiring new employees.

Trenton Mayor Doug Palmer and Willie Taylor, Regional Director of the Philadelphia Regional Office, spoke at the event and said the Trenton/Petrucci partnership has the potential to be a showcase for such endeavors.

Collaborations in Cleveland

The Philadelphia and Chicago Regional Offices of the Economic Development Administration hosted the joint regional conference, "Beyond Innovation: Partnerships and Comprehensive Strategies for Transforming Our Regional Economies", May 12th through 14th in Cleveland, Ohio. More than four hundred fifty economic development practitioners from the Chicago and Philadelphia Regions participated in the three day conference. *Beyond Innovation* provided participants with tangible training during the plenary and breakout sessions as well as opportunities to network with EDA officials and staff and economic development thought leaders from across the two regions.

The conference kicked off with an address at the Rock and Roll Hall of fame from Vice President of Communications and Marketing, Todd Mesek. Mr. Mesek shared the interesting details about the economic impact of the venue and the role this kind of investment can play as a spur to economic development in economically distressed areas. His remarks were an excellent start to the conference.

Conference participants were ready to start the first full day with exciting opening plenary session on Entrepreneurship in the New Economy. Breakout sessions throughout the day were led by speakers and presenters that comprised a diverse group of practitioners and nationally recognized experts. Speakers delivered presentations on topics ranging from tapping into the potential of bio-science and bio-medicine innovations to alternative energy strategies as part economic strategy to best practices in regionalism.

The group was joined by the Honorable Sandy K. Baruah Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development during a mid-day luncheon. Assistant Secretary Baruah shared his insightful views on the Realities of Economic Development in the 21st Century. In addition, the conference provided special training for RLF grantees and university centers, and sessions on future trends in economic development implementation and on the Know Your Regions Framework for Regional Economic Development.

If you would like to get an electronic version of the presentations that were delivered at the conference, they are available online at http://www.nado.org/conferences/archive/other.php?con_id=88.

Conference attendees are encouraged to complete the conference evaluation that was emailed on May 30th. Your thoughts and ideas will assist in improving future EDA Regional conferences.

Special thanks to the members of the conference planning committee, the staff of the Chicago and Philadelphia Regional Offices, and the Staff of the National Economic Development Association.

Thank you to all who participated in the conference as presenters and attendees. Each of you helped to make this event a success!

Ask a PRO

The key to a successful newsletter is that it has relevance to you, the reader. You can help make *The PRO Report* a success by sharing your organization's questions, lessons learned, best practices, and achievements. With your input, *The PRO Report* will provide the information that you want and need.

The *Ask a PRO* section of *The Report* will be dedicated to answering questions posed by newsletter subscribers. The questions may be general on nature or may be addressed to subject specialists on the PRO team. For example, a question about Public works projects may be directed to the Chief of the Construction. You are encouraged to submit your questions every month.

Deadline for submission of questions for consideration is the 10th of the preceding month. Please email questions to: nhope@eda.doc.gov.

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Important Dates & Announcements

Recognition of Exemplary Service

After serving the Economic Development Administration for over 44 years, **Mr. John Kuzma** retired from Federal Service on January 3rd, 2008. During his 44 year tenure with EDA, Mr. Kuzma distinguished himself in his role as the Senior Program Officer for the New England states. John facilitated over millions of dollars in Public Works investments in New England. He and his wife Ellie welcomed their first grandchild soon after his retirement! PRO recognizes and celebrates Mr. John Kuzma's 44 years of exemplary service.

Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) Reports

GPRA Reports for the third quarter of the fiscal year must be received by your Program Officer by Friday, June 27, 2008. Please contact your Program Officer with any questions.

PRO Private Sector Interviews

Representatives from PRO will be conducting private sector interviews throughout the region during the coming months. The purpose of these interviews is to better acquaint regional office staff with the needs and challenges faced by the private sector in conducting business and creating new higher skill higher wage jobs in the region.

