



taking action to attract, retain and engage the future. . .

MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENT

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What does the Future look like?

The Future of Green County to be Discussed October 11

MONROE, WI – “For every three “Baby-Boomer” that retires in the next ten years, only one worker will be available to take their place in the workforce,” according to Rebecca Ryan, Next Generation Consulting. It is because of Ryan’s knowledge and workable solutions that Green County Development Corporation has invited her to speak at the Future Forward! Green County kick-off event on Thursday, October 11 at 7 PM in the Monroe High School’s Performing Arts Center.

Green County has 73.5 percent of its county residents below retirement age, according to the US Census Bureau’s 2000 information. At that time, the median age of the population was 37.9 years. That was seven years ago. And the State of Wisconsin Workforce Development sees the Green County workforce slowly reaching a point where the number of county residents over 65 equals the number of residents 18 year old—this could happen as early as 2018. With a labor force participation rate (those in the labor force that are or could be employed) at 72.9 percent, the pool of workers for expanding businesses is not that large.

Green County Development Corporation is focused on economic development in Green County. According to Executive Director Anna Schramke, CEcD, “GCDC’s mission is to provide leadership in securing the economic health and success of Green County’s communities and businesses.”

“As I see the national and global trends, in the future much of GCDC’s ability to accomplish that mission will be tied to our ability to attract workers to the jobs being created by new and existing businesses in the county,” Schramke said.

Recently GCDC surveyed 110 of the existing businesses in the county. The results of that Business Retention and Expansion Survey had this interesting bit of information: Green County executives have seen and overall growth of 12% in employment over the past five years. And they are anticipating a healthy rate of growth in the coming year (7%) and over the next five years they predict robust growth in employment numbers (20%), according to tabulations of the surveys by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce.

Our businesses say they are expanding and needing workers. Our labor pool is reaching a point where it will stagnate. How does the county prepare to fill the needed labor pool, unless it attracts workers to the area?

More factors are involved in the recruitment of workers to the county. Will we need employees with high school diplomas or will we need workers that have college degrees and beyond? According to the US Census Bureau’s 2000 statistics, 84% of Green County’s population has a high school diploma or higher (18,946), yet only 16.7% has a bachelor’s degree or higher (3,754). According to *Area Development’s* December 2006 end of year report, “Finding skilled workers to fill jobs is a significant challenge in most site selection projects. ... when you invest \$230 million to expand operations for your company’s most successful production line, you want to be sure that you have the most highly skilled employees to operate the equipment.”

In an effort to address the workforce issues and to enhance the economic health of Green County, GCDC is excited to bring Ryan into a dialogue with area businesses and communities. In the following weeks, articles will include information on the employment trends and how Green County fits into the picture, what our new labor force is looking for and what others and we are doing to attract a new labor pool to our county.

The October 11 event is open to anyone interested in taking action to ensure the future of Green County's businesses, schools, organizations and communities. Ryan and her company, Next Generation Consulting have worked with dozens of communities, and have identified characteristics young professionals consider and value when relocating to a community.

Schramke said, "It is imperative to our future that we attract, retain and engage young professionals, creative class workers (including entrepreneurs), and others who will move Green County's FUTURE FORWARD." GCDC is able to bring this event to Monroe without charge because of a generous grant from the R. Kubly Family Foundation. The goal of the R. Kubly Family Foundation is to increase the quality of life in Monroe, Wisconsin by increasing the number of highly-educated individuals living and working in Monroe.

For more information about the Future Forward! initiative, please contact Green County Development Corporation at 608-328-9452, by email at gcdc@tds.net or check out the GCDC website at www.GreenCountyEDC.com.

The Green County Development Corporation (GCDC), a multi-jurisdictional economic development corporation, was formed to bring professional economic development expertise to its member communities to create a competitive advantage to spur job creation and new investments. The organization leverages the resources of the county and its municipalities to ensure economic health and success of Green County communities and businesses.