

# 2014 Annual Report

Thank you to our generous investors.

**Leadership Level**  
City of Ashland  
Ashland County  
Mohican Area Growth Foundation

**Legacy Level**

**Strategic Level**  
Boales Insurance  
Hedstrom Plastics, Inc.  
Simonson Construction Services, Inc.  
Chandler Systems, Inc.

**Development Level**  
American Augers, Inc.  
Advantage Marketing  
Aspen Management USA, LLC  
Enterprise 250, LLC  
Schoonover Industries, Inc.  
Whitcomb & Hess

**Growth Level**  
Ashland Small Manufacturers Council  
Ashland University  
Coldwell Banker Ward Real Estate  
Jackson Township  
Ohio Electric Control  
Rossi Machinery Services, Inc.  
Star Design Build  
Heffelfinger Insurance  
Wayne Savings Community Bank

**Goodwill Level**  
Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce  
Ashland Scale Company, Inc.  
Certified labs and Service, Inc.  
Fergy's On Main  
Ingmand-Whitaker-Myers Insurance  
Mitchell & Sons Moving & Storage  
Samaritan Hospital Foundation  
Samaritan Regional Health System  
Spire Advertising  
Shane Kremser

**Grants Received**  
FirstEnergy Foundation  
Ashland County Community Foundation

**Ashland Area Council for Economic Development**  
211 Claremont Ave.  
Ashland, OH 44805  
419-289-3200  
economicdevelopment@ashlanded.com  
www.ashlanded.com

## Sponsors



# 2014 Annual Report



**Ashland Area Council for Economic Development**  
Community Oriented, Globally Connected

## ASHLAND COUNTY, OHIO: OPEN FOR BUSINESS THE PERFECT LOCATION FOR YOUR GROWING COMPANY

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### AACED Mission Statement

To assist in the success of our existing businesses, recruit new businesses in targeted industry sectors, and lead efforts to develop communities of choice that are attractive to investors, entrepreneurs, and citizens seeking gainful employment, which will enhance the quality of life in the Ashland area.

Welcome to our 2014 Annual Economic Development Report for Ashland County. Each year we attempt to "step up our game" in the field of development and you will find that 2014 was no exception to this rule. You will notice that we have improved not only the quality of the annual report, but also the content and format as well. We are very proud of the progress that we have made in development over the past two years that I have been the Executive Director for both Ashland Area Council for Economic Development and the Mohican Area Growth Foundation. In 2013 and 2014, we have spent a great deal of time building relationships, "planting the seed" so to say, and being persistent, diligent, and creative in our pursuit of development. In 2015, you will see the fruits of our efforts in new construction and expansions throughout the county.

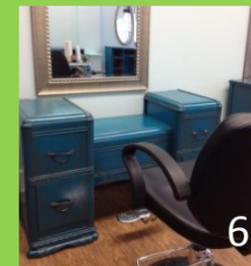
We are very excited to unveil our new Marketing Brochure during our Annual Groundhog Day Forecast Breakfast on February 3, 2015. This is a tool that can be used not only by our office, but by anyone in Ashland County to promote the benefits, beauty, and convenience of living, working, and playing in our county.

In this report, you will see that the office has not slowed down, we are involved in every facet of economic development countywide. While it's impossible to list all of the companies and entrepreneurs that we have assisted along the way, we have attempted to include as many details as possible.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our investors. Economic development would not exist without your generous donations.

Warm Regards,  
Kathryn A. Goon

### Small Business Success Stories



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# Looking Back on 2014

AACED held a press conference on April 4, 2014 as their platform for a funding presentation, a new initiative announcement, and new business announcements. Ashland County Community Foundation received a \$5,000 grant from the FirstEnergy Foundation in order to fund the economic development activities of the Ashland Area Council for Economic Development.

Executive Director, Kathy Goon, announced the “Micropolitan Development” as the new initiative for the organization. The goal was to become one of the top 100 Micropolitan counties in the United States. In order for a project to qualify, one of three criteria had to be met: create 20 new jobs or build 20,000 sq. ft. or invest \$1,000,000 in capital on new construction. The only industries that were eligible were manufacturing, distribution, and headquarters.

There were three new business that announced their plans for Ashland County: Kimberly’s Closet, LLC (Kimberly Swanstrom), Juliana Bridal, LLC (Jessica Neff), and Transport Worldwide, Inc. (David Allen).

On April 17, 2014, AACED hosted their 3rd Annual Job Fair in the Convocation Center at Ashland University. There were 300 eager job seekers and 40 employers. The number of job seekers were down from previous years, but the number of hiring employers was up by 14. This year’s Ashland Area Job Fair will take place on Tuesday, April 21, 2015 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Convocation Center at Ashland University.

In an effort to understand the business climate of local manufacturers, AACED conducted Business Retention and Expansion calls with 42 manufacturers in Ashland County. Local manufacturers reported a 48% growth. These meetings also allowed for AACED to determine which projects qualified for the Top Micropolitan through Site Selection Magazine.

At the semi-annual investor’s meeting, AACED announced that they had at least 7 projects that would qualify for the Top Micropolitan for 2014. By the end of the year, there were 11 projects that qualified. To qualify as a project a company must undergo an expansion or renovation that creates 20 new jobs or build 20,000 sq. ft. or invest \$1 million in new construction.

## Site Submissions for 2014



1817 Masters Avenue, Ashland, OH

Liqui-Box has been serving as a world leader in bag-in-box and pouch packaging for over 50 years and takes pride in delivering innovative solutions that deliver and dispense liquid and semi-liquid foods in a safer, lower cost and more sustainable way. The company continues to invest in the Ashland facility and has recently expanded the footprint, capabilities, and capacity, converting it to the Center of Excellence for Liqui-Box. Due to this growth Liqui-Box will add more than 60 new full-time jobs to the site with industry leading pay and benefits. In partnership with Team NEO and Ashland Area Council for Economic Development Liqui-Box will invest in the training and development of our employees, allowing for an increased level of skillset, ultimately impacting the local economy. Liqui-Box continues to take pride in being a good neighbor and positively affecting the communities in which it does business.

## Resources

- ◇ Erie Basin Resource Conservation and Development Council
- ◇ Community Improvement Corporation
- ◇ Mohican Area Growth Foundation
- ◇ MAGNET
- ◇ PTAC
- ◇ ITAC
- ◇ Ashland Railway
- ◇ Small Business Development Center
- ◇ Ashland County West Holmes Career Center Adult Education
- ◇ Transformation Network
- ◇ Ashland University
- ◇ North Central State College
- ◇ The Ohio State University—Mansfield

## Incentives

- For Manufacturers**  
Enterprise Zone—Based on job creation
- For Business Expansion and Renovation**  
Community Reinvestment Area—Offers tax abatements on commercial and residential properties within an undeveloped area
- For Training**  
Ohio Incumbent Workforce Training Voucher Program— Offered through Ohio Development Services Agency  
On the Job Training Program— Ohio Means Jobs facilitates the discussion with business owners for training dollars.

## Development Partners

- ◇ Ashland County
- ◇ City of Ashland
- ◇ Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce
- ◇ Ashland Area Convention and Visitor’s Bureau
- ◇ Loudonville-Mohican Chamber of Commerce
- ◇ Mohican-Loudonville Convention and Visitor’s Bureau
- ◇ Ashland Main Street
- ◇ Perrysville Economic Development
- ◇ Ohio Means Jobs
- ◇ Team NEO
- ◇ JobsOhio
- ◇ OEDA



Ashland County



## Business Development in 2014

The Happy Grape

Harris Welding

Juliana Bridal

A Vintage Affair

Donna D’s Pizza

Kid’s Kountry & More

Jones Rental

Kidz Closet

Kimberly’s Closet

Corinne’s Salon

Lessons in Fear

## Board Members

Mike Welch Ashland County Commissioner

Steve Stuart City Council President

Jim Gribble President of Mohican Area Growth Foundation

Ev DeVaul United Way of Ashland

Mike Kelly Hedstrom/ Ball, Bounce, & Sport

## Staff

Kathryn Goon, Executive Director

Allison Mayer, Project Manager



# Something's Coming

The construction of the Dunkin' Donuts location on East Main Street is a sure sign that Ashland is "on the map" for many national franchises. In fact, there are several projects that were dead in 2008, but are coming back to life now. Developers across the state have Ashland on their radar so we have made it our mission to let them know we are ready to do business.

With that being said, you will see DIRT moving in 2015. With the Montgomery School Property going up for auction this year, developers across Ohio already have their sights set on the land. I-71 frontage, equidistant from two major metropolises in Ohio, and local incentives will make Ashland an attractive community for development. Similarly, the former Carter Lumber property is under contract so we expect to see that area develop. AACED sent out several proposals to national retail franchises in 2014 and are actively awaiting responses. "I am excited to see what 2015 has in store for Ashland County. Being part of the team that brings new business and new life into Ashland is an honor." says AACED Project Manager Allison Mayer.

Based on our Business Retention and Expansion visits, AACED found that several local manufacturers are going to be growing and expanding in 2015. These expansions and renovations made our short list of possible "Micropolitan" projects for 2015. Before Ashland area businesses begin a major or minor expansion, please contact AACED to find resources in training, tax abatements, job creation tax credit, or possible funding solutions.

## Corinne's Salon—Elise Schiemann, Owner, 112 E. Main St. Ashland

"Corinne's Salon on East Main St of Ashland has been a dream of mine for the past 5 years. It is an organic based salon featuring products mostly from the state of Ohio. This dream of mine started about five years ago when I was working full time, attending college for my bachelor's degree in Fine Arts, and raising my son. I decided to go a new direction in the cosmetology field. Six months later I enrolled myself into the Brown Aveda Institute. While attending Aveda, I fell in love with their mission: To bring knowledge of the products you use to have a healthier you, me, and world. Aveda is an organic brand that focuses on healthier practices. I also fell in love with doing hair. All of this made me want to open my own place here in Ashland. After graduating from the Aveda Institute, my son and I moved back to Ashland. Best decision!! I worked for a local salon for 3 years and then decided it was time to make my dream a reality. Having heard of a small salon space opening up, I jumped at the opportunity to take a look. During the time, I ran into an old friend that owns and had just started A Vintage Affair. She gave me the information to meet with the Economic Department here in Ashland and they helped me gain the tools to make my salon a reality. Now, I am getting ready to open in a few weeks. Corinne's Salon is an organic based salon that features Organic Salon Systems, based out of Clearwater Florida, Aquage, an ocean based product housed out of Chagrin Falls, Ohio, and Zoya, a nail polish that is from Cleveland, Ohio. Corinne's Salon will also feature local potters by using their mugs or tumblers to serve refreshing drinks. I hope that my salon will bring a new outlook on the products we use on our hair and bodies. It doesn't have to be full of chemicals to make you more beautiful than you already are. Corinne's Salon will be peroxide, and ammonia free, along with no parabens and sulfates, just a healthy, relaxing, artistic, getaway for those who enjoy a bit of pampering. I hope to bring a bit of myself to Ashland. Ashland has been good to me and I plan to be good to it with Corinne's Salon. "



## Goals for 2015

### Ashland County

Metric	Goal	Current	% Increase
Number of Jobs	17,992	17,492	+2%
Average Wages	\$17.50	\$16.93/hr	+3.4%
Private Investor Contribution	\$30,000	\$16,800	+44%

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Q1 2014



## Professional Development

In January 2015, AACED became a member of the Ohio Economic Development Association. In an effort to stay up-to-date in the economic development industry, AACED staff members have attended the OEDA Basic Training for 3 consecutive years. OEDA provides professional development, credibility and networking with economic development professionals around Ohio and the nation.

In 2014, AACED sent out and responded to a number of proposals across Ashland County. Ashland County has plenty of developable land in the Ashland Business Park and private properties, but it lacks available building space. Available sites and buildings can be found on AACED's website on the sites and building tab. To list your available property contact the AACED office.

On October 7, 2014, AACED held its second Press Conference of the year. There were five businesses that announced their plans for Ashland County: Kidz Closet (Kimberly Swanstrom), A Vintage Affair (Jennifer Harper), Kids Country & More, LLC (new owner Janice Glenn), Jones Rental, LLC (new owner Garrett Hall), and Harris Welding & Machine Co., Inc. (John Kochenderfer) announced the acquisition of Active Metals. October is Manufacturing Month in Ohio, AACED held a Resource Roundtable for area manufacturers. The panel discussed and shared information on government contracting, international trade, rail, innovation and growth strategies, and expansion opportunities. PTAC, ITAC, MAGNET, Ashland Railway, the Community Improvement Corporation of Ashland, Ohio, and the City of Ashland presented information on how they can assist our local businesses.

AACED staff: In March 2014, Kelly Sullivan was hired as a part-time intern. The intern was responsible for answering the phones and performing a variety of administrative duties. Kelly finished the year with AACED and started graduate school in 2015. Katie Theohares, current Business Administration major at North Central State College, joined the team in early January 2015 as the new intern. In August 2014, Allison Mayer was brought on as the new Project Manager. Allison is a 2013 Ashland University graduate with a marketing background. Submitting proposals, fulfilling state leads, writing business plans, and planning upcoming events keep the office busy.

AACED planned its first fundraiser event in 2014. A Night of Fun and Fundraising raised over \$1,000 for 2015 operations. Blessed by the generosity of local business owners we were able to have a silent auction, raffle and wine tasting at The Happy Grape in downtown Ashland.

For years, AACED has lacked quality, informational marketing materials. AACED partnered with Advantage Marketing, Inc. to design a marketing brochure that will showcase the entire county. The brochure covers demographics, transportation, education, industry, resources, incentives, and quality of life. The information included in the brochure will be relevant for the next several years and has been designed with the idea that small quantities can be printed at a time.

In consideration of the 2014 budget, AACED applied for a grant through the Ashland County Community Foundation for \$3,000. ACCF awarded AACED the full amount of the grant to fund the completion of the brochure. The grant paid for the design and printing of 200 copies.

## Juliana Bridal—Jessica Neff, Owner, Sole Employee, 42 West Main St.

Juliana Bridal was simply started with dream and desire to make every girl feel beautiful when she walked down the aisle. With the help and guidance of the Ashland Area Council for Economic Development, along with assistance from Erie Basin we were able to open a well-needed retail location right in downtown Ashland. We renovated the old Grindle & Bender building; being in the heart of downtown, we wanted to restore as much of the original building as possible, but gave it an up-scale, elegant and functional design to fit the needs of a full service bridal and formalwear shop. We officially opened March 15, 2014 and have been continuously thriving since that very day!

Our slogan is "bridal elegance with a hometown feel." Our goal was to give every girl (or guy) the opportunity to have a memorable, yet elegant experience without having to travel far or go outside their budget. All of our bridal gowns are priced at or below \$1500 and all formal wear is under \$309. We only buy merchandise from affordable wholesalers so in turn we can pass on those low prices to our merchants. Our affordable prices coupled with our hospitality proved to be a big part of our growing success!

In 9 months of being open, in 2014, we dressed approximately 46 wedding parties and as of January 2015, have already dressed (paid sales) more than half of that number for 2015 weddings! We are expected to double, almost triple our numbers from last year in 2015! We have had an unbelievable first year but of course there is always room for improvement. We have relied mainly on word of mouth, social media and free advertising for marketing in 2014. Thanks to the AACED we worked with the AU Entrepreneurship program and I was assigned to amazingly dedicated students who really kick started some of my advertising and marketing needs. With the help of my students Kate & Alex, we were able to launch a radio advertisement and a brand new website in just few short months. This year our goal is to hit it hard with advertising and get our name heard! The support and success of Juliana Bridal has been overwhelming, it's been an incredible opening year & I cannot wait to see what this year and the years to come bring us and this community!



## 2014 Projects

**Baker Properties, Inc.**

**Ohio Tool Works**

**Packaging Corporation of America (PCA)**

**Mansfield Plumbing Products**

**Liqui-Box**

**Enterprise Parkway Leasing**

**Hedstrom Plastics**

**Future Molding (Hedstrom Injection)**

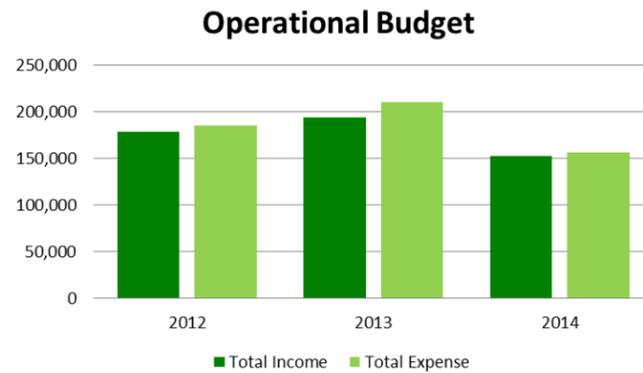
**Straightaway Fabrications, Ltd.**

# Down, but Not Out

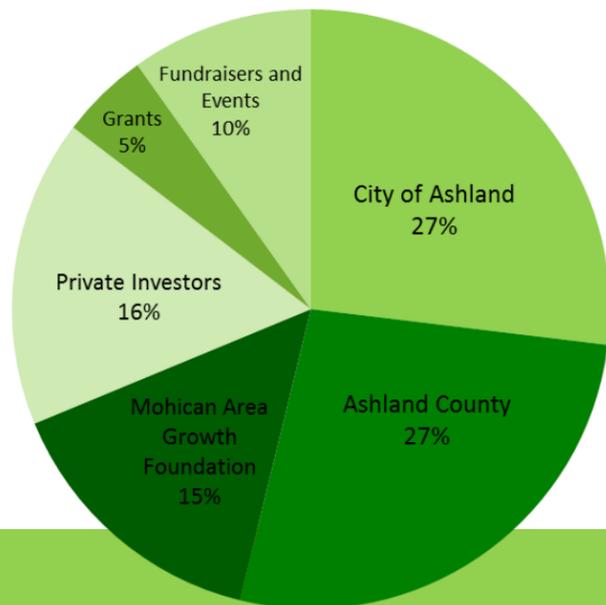
Ashland Area Council for Economic Development ended 2014 in a deficit. Coming out of 2013 with a \$16,237.75 deficit, AACED has decreased the deficit by 33%, -\$10,929.95.

As mentioned in the previous section, AACED hired an intern in 2014. The 2014 budget had not included the cost of an intern which contributed to the deficit. Total funding for AACED was down \$50,000 from 2013 which affected the discretionary spending. In order to overcome the budget, AACED hosted a fundraising event and applied for grants. The 2015 Budget is approved with a \$5,141.32 deficit. To cover the cost of operations, AACED will host another fundraiser in the fall and plans to apply for grants as needed. AACED's private investor contribution has decreased by 3.7%. To assure our investors that their contributions are being stewarded appropriately AACED will send a quarterly eNewsletter with updates. "I am confident that as manufacturers, professionals, developers, and entrepreneurs see the benefit of the services and resources offered by this office, they will want to continue to donate to the organization for the good of economic development." says Executive Director, Kathryn Goon.

AACED is confident that with some changes the organization will be stronger than ever. With an emphasis on fundraising and improving the quality of relationships with our investors and potential investors we plan to increase private contributions by 44%. Eager to improve the quality of life in Ashland County, AACED will do what it takes to bring more businesses to the area. Goals for 2015 include increasing the number of jobs in Ashland County by 500 and obtaining a higher average wage (\$15.00 to \$20.00 an hour) for our residents. Although the numbers are lower, AACED's spirits are high because of the amount of entrepreneurs interested in starting their own businesses and quality leads coming from the Jobs Ohio and Team NEO.



## Source of Funds



## AACED partners with Ashland University to offer students "Real World Experience"

Just as in 2013, AACED partnered with the Ashland University Dauch College of Business and Economics. Dr. Dan Sullivan with the Entrepreneurship program emphasizes the importance of real world experience for AU students. This program pairs a group of upperclassmen students with a local business owner. The students use what they have learned in the classroom and apply it to the business. This course is mutually beneficial for both the students and businesses owners. The students' help comes at no cost to the companies and the students see the everyday operations of a small business.

This year the students created websites, integrated a menu with the company's Facebook, created a competitive analysis, planned a Grand Opening event, and helped set up a computer system. The companies involved this year included Juliana Bridal, Kidz Closet, Rhoads Jewelry, J-Ville Pub & Grill, A Vintage Affair, Rain Drop Products, and Kid's Kountry & More. AACED already has companies ready to work with the students for the Spring and Fall of 2015.

A Vintage Affair—Jennifer Harper,  
Owner, Sole Employee, 122 E. Main Street

"A Vintage Affair started 1 1/2 years ago when I painted a table after having sanding and priming it first. 'Wouldn't it be great if there was a paint that you didn't have to do all of the normal preparations first?' With a little research, I found there was. Chalk Paint! I purchased some and that was the beginning. After refurbishing pieces in my home for customers for almost a year, I was finally able to bring my business to downtown Ashland. Thanks to the help of Kathryn Goon and AACED, as well as Erie Basin. Kathy helped me get my business plan together and really bring to life what I never thought would be possible!

I participated in the Entrepreneurship class from A.U. I feel it was a great benefit for not only them but for me as well. They really got to see all of the in's and out's of starting your own business and in return helped me set up a website for my A Vintage Affair.

In 2015 I plan on offering more workshops not only for Chalk Painting 101's, but also bringing in local artists and combine my love for Chalk Paint with their love for art. I plan on working with other downtown businesses to make this happen. I appreciate all of the support that I have received thus far and can only imagine the possibilities to come."



## International Marketing

Professor Kris Hovsepien also provides her students the opportunity to have real world experience. As part of the students' final grade, they were required to create a strategy for a domestic company to expand internationally. In the fall of 2014, 3 groups presented the economic and cultural factors that would effect Zephyr Industries if they were to enter Saudi Arabian market. Presentations also included a plan to overcome or take advantage of those factors. The students were judged on the understanding of the culture, the reality of the plan, and presentation skills. The judges included Dan Sullivan of Ashland University, Douglas Brown and son, owners of Zephyr Industries, and Allison Mayer from AACED.

