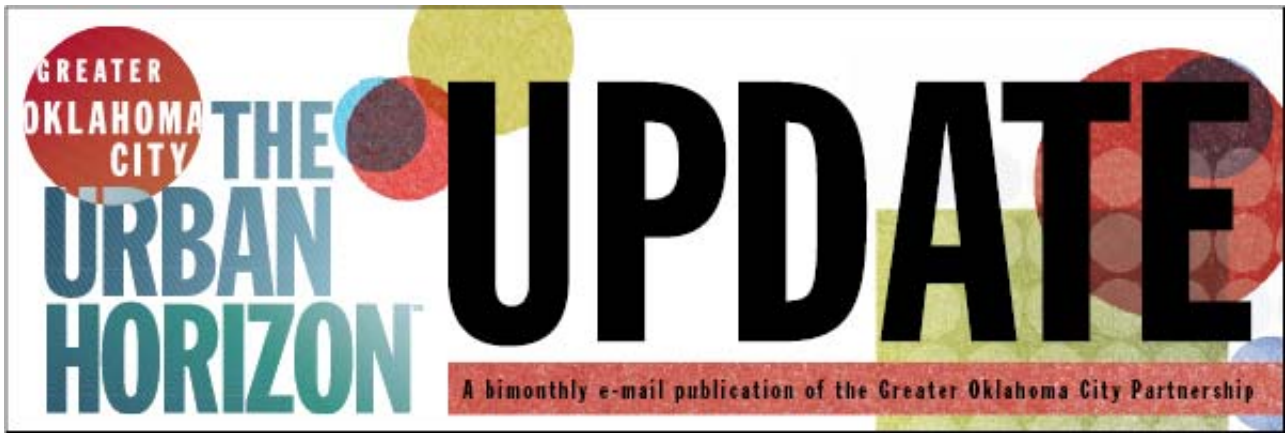

This is a monthly newsletter e-mailed to the Greater Oklahoma City Partnership to highlight economic development successes throughout the region. Please forward to your key stakeholders to keep them informed of the benefits of our partnership.

RECENT PARTNERSHIP RESULTS

Selexys Pharmaceuticals to "Bring the Pain" to Inflammation

Selexys Pharmaceuticals Corporation recently announced the formation of their privately-held startup corporation in Oklahoma City. They will be developing drugs to treat inflammatory and thrombotic diseases, and expect an initial total of 5 employees with a $200,000 payroll and a $3 million investment.

Valtech Software Not Soft on OKC

International Software Development firm Valtech Technologies is setting up an Oklahoma City office, choosing Greater OKC over several other markets including Austin, Dallas, Denver and Raleigh. Initially, total jobs at the facility are expected to number 100 with an average wage of $78,000.

Mattress Maker Not Taking Success Lying Down

Nashville-based mattress manufacturer Southerland is expanding their relatively new OKC operation by 50 employees due to increased demand for its products. Southerland chose Oklahoma City initially in order to better and more easily serve central and western US markets.

PARTNERSHIP NEWS

Pre-Session Legislative Rundown

Here's a little peek at what will be happening down at 23rd and Lincoln in the upcoming Legislative Session:

- 2008 State Legislature passed a funding program to protect ODOT'S 8-year construction plan calling for bonds to be sold and in addition state funding must also go forward.
- Healthcare Committee – Healthcare mandates would increase coverage 5% to 10%, which would affect small businesses, hence we push back on mandates due to small businesses electing to drop coverage altogether for their employees, adding to the already 650,000 Oklahomans who already do not have health care insurance.
- Economic Dev issues -- protecting incentives / programs already in place is a priority, such as

not placing sunsets on existing incentives in statutory language.

- EDGE fund - universal support for program, finding permanent funding source is the challenge.
- Oklahoma Quality Events Act – We need to pass a good events bill to compete with neighboring states, such as Texas, which passed one in 2005.
- Environmental - clean air is a concern -- state implementation plan will eventually have to be discussed and submitted to the EPA showing how our state will address federal clean air standards to stay in compliance under new more stringent regulations.
- Taxation - revenues are up due to Gross Production Tax, but many traditional revenue drivers are down (gas tax, sales tax, etc). Rainy Day Fund is highest ever at $600 million.
- Chamber headed to Washington D.C. last week to visit / lobby Oklahoma's Congressional Delegation. The Federal Highway Trust Fund and the revised Clean Air amendments are two major topics that were addressed.

No Bedlam in Biology: OU, OSU Scientists Receive Research Grant

Researchers from the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University have announced receipt of a five-year, $1.3 million research grant from the National Science Foundation to detect and study previously unidentified unique microorganisms in natural habitats. Dr. Mostafa Elshahed and Dr. Caroline Beller will serve as the lead researchers for OSU, while Dr. Lee Krunholz will fill the role at OU.

Next Partnership Meeting: Oct 2, 2nd Floor Conference Room, OKC Chamber

Join us as Russell Claus and Cathy O'Connor give us the latest on Devon Energy and Downtown OKC, what's in store for Core to Shore, and how more canals in Bricktown will turn frowns upside- down. Also, free coffee, quartered cookies and approximately 3 moderately funny wisecracks courtesy of your fellow Partnership members.

Bonus: next meeting haiku

Hear the latest news

Buildings rise and highways move

OKC downtown

Prague

Recent Property Transactions Result in New Digs for Chamber, Others

The Prague Chamber of Commerce and Main Street Prague have moved into the Municipal Building at 820 North Jim Thorpe Blvd. The City of Prague recently acquired the former Vision Bank location for offices when the bank constructed a new facility on adjacent property. All city offices have been moved into the newly remodeled premises. The Prague Police Department will expand into space at the old City Hall. The Chamber building housed the Chamber, Main Street, the Red Cross and a beauty shop. The entire building will be remodeled to accommodate offices for the Association of Governmental Risk Pools, a national trade association based in Prague.

Edmond

Edmond Named One of America's Top-Rated Smaller Cities, Best Places to Live 2008

For the fourth straight year, Edmond was named among America's Top-Rated Smaller Cities by Universal Reference Publications. The publisher uses five key criteria to find its top 111 cities of populations between 25,000 and 99,000: population growth, crime rate, educational attainment, income, and unemployment rate. Edmond was the only Oklahoma city to make the list. Additionally, Edmond was recently named one of "America's Best Places to Live 2008" by MONEY magazine. Factors used

by the magazine to define its list include job growth, income, housing, quality of life, education, health, and culture & leisure activities.

UCO Breaks Ground for Groundbreaking Forensic Science Institute

One would need to use extensive forensic science skills in order to get an idea of what 2nd street and Garland Godfrey drive used to look like after the completion of the UCO Forensic Science Institute building next year. The $12 million project features designs by OKC-based Frankfurt Short Bruza with construction by locally-owned Timberlake Construction. The building is expected to house 35,000 square feet of space, boasting a 165-seat auditorium, three 50-seat classrooms, and an evidence recovery training area. Groundbreaking occurred in June, with about 150 people attending. No reports have surfaced thus far on the number of microscope / dead body jokes that are expected to be verbalized during the first semester that students inhabit the building, scheduled for the Fall of 2009.

Furniture Store Couched in New Surroundings

Recent business openings in Edmond include I.O. Metro furniture in The Shoppes, located on Broadway and 33rd, the first retail tenant in the new 160,000-square-foot development. I.O. Metro describes its retail concept as "a specialty lifestyle furniture retailer that sells eclectic import furniture and accessories in retail stores across the Midwest. Often defined by the press as 'not your typical furniture store,' I.O. Metro has few direct competitors."

Plans for Hospital Approved

Integris' plans for a new 151,000 square-foot, 40-bed hospital and office building in Edmond east of I-35 on 15th street have been approved. Construction is expected to begin within 2 months and will cost from $80 - $100 million. Total jobs at the facility could number up to 300.

Guthrie / Edmond

Guthrie-Edmond Regional Airport Receives Grant, Building New Hangars

The Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission has awarded a $220,000 grant to the Guthrie-Edmond Regional Airport in order to extend two taxi lanes. The news follows on the heels of the announcement of plans to build 10 new T-hangars at the airport earlier this summer.

Midwest City

Tinker and the Primes Event Primed and Ready for Program Ad Sales

The Tinker and the Primes National Business Event, a production of the Eastern Oklahoma County MRO & Aerospace Partnership, the Midwest City Chamber of Commerce, and the Rose State College Small Business Development Center, will be held November 17 – 19 in the Reed Conference Center at the Sheraton Midwest City. The purpose of the event is to help small businesses win government contracts. With 1,500 business and military leaders representing 500 organizations from across the US expected, attending the event and purchasing space in the event program can be a good investment. For information, contact Johanna Clark at (405)733-3801 or **johanna.clark@midwestcityok.com**, and see **www.TinkerandthePrimes.com** for event information.

Stillwater

Shutter Company Letting Success Shine In

Even though owner Chris Tietz cites Oklahomans as being his best customers for Stillwater-based manufacturer The Shutter Mill, Inc. and its well-known lineup of Kirtz-brand custom shutters, it doesn't hurt to count Woody Allen, Julie Andrews, Larry Bird and Clint Black among your clientele. The Shutter Mill's handcrafted interior shutters have steadily gained attention as the firm has been able to nimbly take advantage of changes in home décor and lifestyle trends over the past 20 years, as well as its ability to source and use unusual, hard-to-find and antique wood in some of its offerings. Tietz' business can also offer larger shutters than competitors due to the higher-quality hardwoods it can obtain and utilize.

During the manufacturing process, raw wood arrives at 8 different manufacturing stations along the production line, shaped and fashioned along by workers operating equipment and machines custom-designed and built by Tietz and his team.

Tietz recently invested about $500,000 in order to add over 11,000 square feet of production space, bringing the total to 33,000 square feet. The firm employs about 50 employees and markets shutters nationwide through a network of dealers and showrooms (including a local one on-site). A dealer / showroom list and details of offerings can be found on its Web site (**www.kirtz.com**).

PARTNERSHIP RESOURCES

2008 Economic and Workforce Development Summit

"Crossing the Line: Evolving Regional Strategies"

Even though it will be almost Halloween, there's no reason to be scared of the 2008 Economic and Workforce Development Summit. Economic Development and Workforce leaders (and perhaps a few ghosts, goblins, goonies and other assorted spooky creatures) from all over the region and beyond converge on the Cox Center in Downtown Oklahoma City October 27-28. With a focus on development of region-based EcDev and Workforce efforts, a panel of speakers and leaders have been assembled that have "crossed the line" from planning to action and can give attendees valuable information on "what has actually worked, what has not, and what might drive the solutions of tomorrow." The Summit's agenda and other details can be found online at **www.oedc.net**. See you there (and don't forget your notebooks, business cards and monster repellent)!

IEDC Strategic Planning Course Coming Your Way in 2009

Pull out the sharpies and hold on to your wigs and keys, kids: It's time to board the IEDC Training Train! Hey, it's never too early to start marking your calendars for IEDC courses. Plan on attending the IEDC Strategic Planning Course, being held Aug. 27 – 28, 2009, in an as-yet-to-be-determined-but-sure-to-be-fantastic location. IEDC sets the standard for Economic Development training, so be there or risk being a square economic developer.

ePulse is the new black

Is your community involved in BRE activities? The GOKC Chamber has negotiated a package with ePulse to allow Partnership members to use its Web application for BRE activities. If your community is in Oklahoma County, the application is available now (for primary job companies only, typically). The contract is structured so that other counties can be activated upon need of use. Talk to Tiffanie Ord (**tord@okcchamber.com**) about the use of the app, possible headaches you might encounter on the front end, and the various reports you can pull. Formal training is also available. Customization and information sensitivities / confidentiality are available when sharing networks and top-level information. The tool is Web-based so it can be used anywhere your Web connection is active. Contact Tiffanie and Robin (**rkrieger@okcchamber.com**) with questions -- the application is a benefit of partnership membership.

About the Partnership

No matter where a primary job employer locates, everyone in the region "wins." The 10-county Greater Oklahoma City Partnership was established in 2003 for strategic economic development. Together, we are working to secure regional corporate locations, business retention and expansions and develop tools for local economic development professionals. Our cities, counties and governmental entities are co-dependent on each other. The Greater Oklahoma City Partnership looks forward to leveraging resources, uniting leadership, marketing our region and increasing our competitiveness.

Future Issues

If you have announcements to be included in future issues of this newsletter, please e-mail Ruby Rahill

at **rrahill@okcchamber.com** to submit information.

You have received this e-mail because you are a member of the Greater Oklahoma City Partnership
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Thank you for your continued participation in the Partnership.