

BRADLEY COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

MARK DIGGS

DISCUSSED KNOWLEDGE-BASED INDUSTRY RECRUITMENT

Mark Diggs the founder and Board Member of Veterans Villages of America and the founder, Board Member of LITMUS, LLC and co-author of “The Keys to Growth in the New Economy: Investing in Discovery, Engineering and Entrepreneurship” spoke at the BCEDC Board Meeting. Mr. Diggs explained that he first visited Warren about a year ago when he was working with SEACBEC on his veterans’ initiative. Mr. Diggs spoke to the Board on SEED-Small Enterprise Economic Development.

Mr. Diggs explained that he has been doing economic development consulting in a lot of different ways for many years. He advised that there is a different model for economic growth in rural communities. His model deals with the creation of Knowledge-based industries and preventing the “brain drain” of a community. Mr. Diggs and Dr. John Ahlen wrote the free online book, “The Keys to Growth in the New Economy: Investing in Discovery, Engineering and Entrepreneurship”. Their book identifies the key problem faced by Arkansas’ rural communities.

Mr. Diggs stated that attracting Manufacturing-based Industry is important to communities but in today’s economy, rural communities need to also be attracting Knowledge-based Industries. In their book he and Dr. Ahlen tried to identify why communities were not as successful as they need to be with the provisional economic development methods of recruiting manufacturing and retaining existing manufacturing. Mr. Diggs also recommended reading “The Chicken Came First” by Bill Asti. He explained that the economic development program SEED explains how small communities can invest in discovery, engineering and entrepreneurship. Mr. Diggs explained that the incentives to attract high-tech, high-paying jobs are not the same as the incentives needed to attract manufacturing jobs.

Mr. Diggs presented a graph that represented the economic system. The graph displayed four quadrants. One area was Economic Development where jobs come in with recruiting efforts but could be lost through plant relocations. This section was labeled as

providing traditional jobs. Another quadrant displayed was education, K-12. This area demonstrates the educational training for traditional jobs and Knowledge-based jobs. The third quadrant was Higher Education & Research. This section represented 2yr colleges up to the University of Arkansas and research institutions. This is where the intellectual property is produced and the technology comes from for Knowledge-based companies. The last quadrant is New Businesses/Growth, which encompasses entrepreneurship and investment capital.

Mr. Diggs explained that if a community wants to recruit for these small startup Knowledge-based companies they need to be anchored to the community. This can be accomplished by investment/ownership, tailored incentives/involvement, community support and superior quality of life. It is important to train the workforce to perform the jobs necessary for the Knowledge-Based companies.

Mr. Diggs discussed what it takes to create Knowledge-based companies. First you need an entrepreneur with the necessary vision. Next, you must have the technology to create the company. Then you must have risk capital, which is very difficult to locate. Mr. Diggs stated that if a community has the risk capital entrepreneurs with good and new ideas will locate in the area. The last thing you must have is human capital. Knowledge-based companies must have access to workers with the skill sets specific to the needs of the company.

He stated that the successful initiatives are private sector led but supported by local governments, the community and educational institutions. Mr. Diggs stated that a private sector group needs a leader that is willing to implement the SEED program. To attract, grow and retain Knowledge-based companies you must meet business and worker requirements. He further described the business requirements as patient risk capital, investor support, community support, human capital, communications infrastructure and suitable facilities.

HOW CAN BCEDC HELP LOCAL BUSINESSES?

BCEDC can help your business in such areas as:

- Land and building acquisitions
- Financial packaging
- Demographic and economic data
- Incentive packaging
- Workforce training
- Plant expansions
- Entrepreneurial and small business development

BECOME A PART OF BCEDC

CALL 870-226-3760

AND ASK ABOUT

MEMBERSHIP

Mr. Diggs stated that there are 3 categories of worker requirements; absolute, critical and desirable. The absolute requirements include a stable and safe community, availability of good healthcare facilities and affordable/ adequate housing. The critical requirements include child care facilities, good K-12 educational institutions, nearby 2 year colleges, a University system, libraries, artistic and athletic organizations and a variety of religious institutions. The desirable requirements are restaurants and entertainment, commercial airport and upscale/boutique shopping. Some of these requirements can be in nearby locations and not directly in the community, but it is to the advantage of the community to strive to develop as many of the requirements as feasible. (Continued)

| November 2014 Jobs Update | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Bradley Co. Employers | # Emp. | Openings |
| AR Superior Federal CU | 13 | 0 |
| Armstrong Flooring | 251 | 1+ |
| Ashcraft Wood Products | 19 | 0 |
| Bradley Brand Furniture | 5 | 3 |
| Bradley County | 69 | 1 |
| Bradley Co. Medical Ctr. | 243 | 18 |
| Chapel Woods Health & Rehab | unavailable | unavailable |
| City of Hermitage | 6 | 0 |
| City of Warren | 51 | 2 |
| First Presbyterian Childcare Ctr | 22 | 0* |
| First State Bank of Warren | 31 | 0 |
| Fulghum Fibers | 10 | 0 |
| Hermitage Schools | 78 | 2 |
| New Beginnings, CASA | 22 | 0 |
| Oasis Trading | 42 | 0 |
| OK Foods | 14 | 0 |
| Ouachita Hardwood | 40 | 0* |
| Ozark Mountain Poultry | 148 | 1 |
| Potlatch | 163 | 1 |
| SE AR Community Action Corp. | 88 | 1 |
| SE AR Human Dev. Ctr. | 277 | 22 |
| Super Valu Foods | 54 | 1** |
| The Mad Butcher | 62 | 1*** |
| Townsend Flooring | 30 | 0* |
| UAMS/KIDS FIRST—Warren | 18 | 0 |
| Union Bank | 8 | 0 |
| Warren Bank & Trust | 36 | 0 |
| Warren School Dist. | 289 | 2 |
| TOTAL | 2089 | 56 |

*Taking Applications **Applications on Thur. ***Applications on Mon., 1-4 pm

Continued— Diggs

Mr. Diggs discussed ways to structure risk capital investors. He explained that Bradley County needs a “Group X” that is willing to invest risk capital and provide non-monetary support, such as mentoring or serving as Board of Directors.

Mr. Diggs gave an example of a bio-fuel manufacturer as a Knowledge-based company that would fit a rural community. This company produces fuel by using agricultural waste materials, such as tomato vines or corn stalks. Mr. Diggs stated that it is important to make an honest assessment of the community’s ability and to locate “target” knowledge-based companies within the community.

**DON'T FORGET TO JOIN US AT MOLLY'S
FOR THE 7:00 AM
MONDAY MORNING MEETING**

JOB OPENINGS AT:

Armstrong Flooring: Has Ongoing True Temp production worker positions. The positions are typically long term with the possibility of becoming perm. Interested candidates apply at ESA in Monticello. Permanent positions may be found at www.armstrong.com as they become available.

Bradley Co. Medical Center: Has job openings for 15 PRN Positions, 2 F/T and 1 P/T Position. For information on job openings and to apply go to — www.bradleycountymedicalcenter.com/jobs

Ozark Mountain Poultry: Will be hiring for a second shift. Contact the Arkansas Workforce Center in Monticello, AR at 870-367-7105 for information.

Potlatch Corporation: Has an opening for a fully qualified electrician. Any interested candidates can view the job description and apply at www.potlatchcorp.com. Potlatch is an EEO/AA /Veteran employer with competitive wages and benefits.

SE AR Community Action Corp. Has an opening for a Headstart Teacher in Monticello. Call Carolyn Davis at SEACAC, 870-226-2668

HOW CAN BCEDC HELP

BCEDC

110 N. Myrtle St.
Warren , AR 71671

Phone: 870-226-3760

Fax: 870-226-3770

websites:

www.bcedcar.com

arkansasitesselection.com

E-mail:

bradleycountyidc@sbcglobal.net

SE AR Human Development

Ctr.: For job openings information go online to www.arstatedjob.com

The Mad Butcher: Has openings for a F/T Cake Decorator and P/T employees. Applications taken at The Mad Butcher on Mondays from 1-4 pm.

Warren School Dist.: For details on job openings and to apply contact the Warren School Dist at 870-226-6738 or online at www.edline.net/pages/warren_sd

If your company would like to list job openings in the BCEDC Newsletter call 870-226-3760 or email bradley-countyidc@sbcglobal.net

Veterans Villages of America

Mark Diggs also discussed the “Veterans Villages of America” project. Mr. Diggs stated multiple veteran statistics; number of local veterans, current economic impact of veterans and potential economic impact.

He explained that veterans return from war changed and must readjust to their family, community and economic situation. These situations often begin a downward spiral.

Mr. Diggs explained that he founded the Honor Homes for Heroes in early 2013. He joined with Col. Mike Ross and Bill Asti to create the “First Veterans Village”. The Veterans Village concentrates on the “at risk” veterans and their families. Their goal is to create 4 more throughout the state. Mr. Diggs explained that the Veterans Village is designed to be a place where a veteran can come to live with their family for a short time. They may leave under one of three conditions; they may dislike the atmosphere and choose to leave, they may break the rules of conduct and be asked to

leave or they may graduate. Graduation is when you have received some type of skill set training, the spouse can also receive educational training, you have to have worked at your skill set for a minimum of 6 months, you have to have a job and a place to live and you will leave with 6 months of income that has been put in trust for the family.

They were contacted by Habitat for Humanity in Pulaski County and asked to visit the Baring Cross community in No. Little Rock, AR. They were shown new homes that a veteran could get into for about \$400.00 total. Mr. Diggs explained that the area has the largest VA hospital in the state, Pulaski County Vo-Tech, recreational facilities, public schools and a soon to be constructed new Veterans Facility. Mr. Diggs advised that the Veterans Villages of America a 501-c3 non-profit organization has already placed veterans in these homes and North Little Rock is giving the organization land to construct additional homes.