It was one year ago at our annual meeting, the Regional Growth Partnership first acknowledged its role in addressing that nebulous “workforce” issue – recognizing it as the greatest challenge and hurdle facing Northwest Ohio. At that point, it undoubtedly appeared as a daunting, perhaps even overwhelming challenge, one facing nearly every community across the country.

Today, we’re facing that challenge with confidence – now even seeing incredible opportunities for Toledo and Northwest Ohio through the solutions coming forward. Today, that hurdle is being climbed.

It’s part of a transformation for the RGP as we, in collaboration with our regional partners, address the changing economic landscape and how it impacts our efforts in Northwest Ohio. In 2020, talent, innovation and new, aggressive initiatives best represent the RGP’s economic development strategy.

We do this while still continuing to tackle, sell and market the key industry drivers of our economy including automotive and advanced manufacturing. And throughout this report, you will see evidence demonstrating exceptional job growth and capital investment within those traditional industries, as well as numerous case studies of why businesses chose Northwest Ohio.

It has been our partnership with JobsOhio and our relationships with local economic development groups which have allowed us, and Northwest Ohio, to experience such success in these traditional areas the last several years. And it’s those same partnerships which are critical in setting a vision with our region at the forefront of tomorrow’s economy.

Dean Monske
PRESIDENT & CEO
REGIONAL GROWTH PARTNERSHIP
Final Numbers

The Regional Growth Partnership is the lead economic development organization representing 17 counties in Northwest Ohio. As a 100% privately funded corporation, the RGP is committed to attracting new investment, new business and new high-quality jobs to the region.

Those efforts are accomplished through:

- Proactive outreach and engagement with companies and site consultants
- Aggressive lead generation marketing programs
- Effective Business Retention & Expansion Program

The RGP also serves as the Regional Network Partner for JobsOhio to facilitate economic development efforts as well as manage the incentive process.
Dissecting the Numbers

PROJECT BREAKDOWN by JOBS
- Advanced Manufacturing: 37%
- Automotive: 10%
- Food Processing: 6%
- Energy: 2%
- Logistics: 15%
- Other: 2%

PROJECT BREAKDOWN by INVESTMENT
- Advanced Manufacturing: 43%
- Automotive: 15%
- Food Processing: 6%
- Energy: 4%
- Logistics: 2%
- Other: 2%

2019 ANNUAL REPORT
Some Hometown Cooking

With its deep agricultural heritage, Northwest Ohio has long been recognized as a leading location for the food processing industry. The region's many advantages include an abundant supply of fresh water, a strong supply chain, a nationally recognized research and innovation center for the food industry, and a comprehensive transportation network.

Investment in Northwest Ohio's food industry jumped 78% from the previous year, with brand name companies such as Spangler Candy, Rudolph Foods and Hometown Food Company investing millions. Over the last three years, Northwest Ohio companies have invested more than $328 million into their food operations.

2019 Metrics:

273 New Jobs
$99 Million Investment

- Lowest tax rate in Midwest for the food/ag industry
- 300 food processing companies in Northwest Ohio
- Workforce of 16,000 in regional food processing industry
- Home of the largest soup and ketchup plants in the U.S.
Northwest Ohio has an agricultural fabric that exists where people say, ‘You know what, I’m not afraid of hard work,’ … and I think that’s what sets our region apart.”

Steve Dandurand, CEO & President, Ballreich’s
Ballreich’s

The commitment from a group of Northwest Ohio investors toward an iconic and cherished chip company saved the treasured brand from bankruptcy. Ballreich’s, a 100-year-old potato chip manufacturer in Tiffin, faced an uncertain future before some local business leaders stepped up to inject needed capital and marketing dollars. Now, Ballreich’s stands much stronger and is looking to grow its footprint and establish itself as “the craft chip” of the snack food industry.
Producing Fine Results

Over the last several years, the Regional Growth Partnership has successfully worked with its economic development partners in building a more diverse industry base. Yet we still recognize and value our traditional manufacturing sector as a critical driver of our economy. In 2019, the RGP and its partners closed 52 projects under the advanced manufacturing umbrella. These projects produced $1 billion of investment in Northwest Ohio along with 1,278 new jobs.

Along with a nationally recognized workforce, Northwest Ohio offers manufacturing companies a favorable business climate and multiple logistics resources. The region has also committed to developing a broad inventory of available sites and spec buildings.

- More than 5,000 new jobs and $3 billion of investment last three years
- Lowest taxes in Midwest for capital-intensive manufacturing
- Manufacturing workforce exceeding 130,000
- 400 manufacturing companies in Northwest Ohio
Toledo’s logistics assets make it easy and convenient for distribution to our customers. The efforts of JobsOhio and the RGP were extremely helpful in identifying the right location for our new facility and identifying grant opportunities for new equipment and machinery.”

Rick Wasserman, President, Pinnacle Technology Group
North Star BlueScope Steel

One of Northwest Ohio’s more successful manufacturing companies demonstrated its commitment to the region with a $700 million investment at its Fulton County site. North Star BlueScope Steel, with a 25-year history in Delta, cited the central location to its customer base and transportation assets as key factors in its decision to reinvest.

The company expects 700 construction contractors on site to build the new facilities which will include a third electric arc furnace and a second caster. The plant’s continued success has earned the facility recognition as the crown jewel of the BlueScope group.

90 New Jobs

$700 Mil Capital Investment

- Leading steel manufacturing company
- Largest ever one-time investment in Fulton County
- Expanding production capacity to 3.3 million tons per year
Forming a Strong Bond

With a primary mission of attracting new companies to Northwest Ohio, the Regional Growth Partnership business development team travels extensively, both domestically and internationally, to meet with targeted businesses and consultants. Establishing, building and nurturing relationships with these key constituents has elevated the RGP brand and name recognition, opening the door for greater opportunities and successes. These efforts helped in producing the 2019 Wins, but just as important, are laying the groundwork for future, potential attraction projects.

RGP’s Current Project Pipeline:

- **85** Projects
- **7,876** Jobs
- **$6.7 Billion** Capital Investment

The RGP Team’s Domestic Travels in 2019 included:

- Milwaukee
- Detroit
- Indianapolis
- Washington D.C.
- Naples
- Vail
- Santa Barbara
- Dallas
- Salt Lake City
- Charlotte
- Detroit
- Santa Barbara
- Milwaukee
- Indianapolis
- Washington D.C.
Familiar Friends

The RGP hosted its 6th annual FAM Tour, building on its mission to develop and grow relationships with national site consultants. Over a three-day period, the RGP hosted 11 consultants, touring across Northwest Ohio to meet and hear from corporate leaders talk about doing business in Northwest Ohio. This “Familiarization” Tour ended with a visit to Put-in-Bay and an overnight stay at Rattlesnake Island.

“...I enjoyed the FAM Tour very much and Northwest Ohio is absolutely an area I would consider and recommend to other people moving forward.” — John Rae, Vice President, Cleveland Golf

2019 FAM TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Helicopter tour over premier Northwest Ohio sites
- Consultants attending from such cities as Los Angeles, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Atlanta and Dallas
- Boat ride down the Maumee River to see up close key port-side assets
- Panel discussion featuring university and community college representatives discussing tomorrow’s workforce
- FAM Tour 2020 takes place June 16-18
A Safe Bet

Just last year, automotive companies in Northwest Ohio created more than 600 jobs while investing $139 million into operations. Understanding the significance this industry plays locally, the Regional Growth Partnership strategically identifies ongoing opportunities to further develop this sector. One such opportunity, the CAR MBS show in Traverse City, Mich., has proven worthy for the RGP and Northwest Ohio. The event attracts automotive industry leaders and visionaries who deliver thought-provoking talks about the future of the global industry.

For the last several years, the RGP has hosted and sponsored Casino Night where visitors are welcomed to an inviting atmosphere of casino gambling (fake play chips, real prizes) with lots of opportunity for fun, food and social networking.

Last year’s Casino Night drew more than 350 visitors to the RGP’s event. The 2020 CAR MBS show takes place Aug. 4

For those involved in the automotive industry, there is not a better place in the world to meet and interact with executives, develop and nurture relationships and discuss the future of this industry.”  

Gary Thompson, Executive VP  
Regional Growth Partnership
A Very Fair Trade

The RGP takes a lead role for Northwest Ohio in developing new international investment and trade opportunities. With excellent research and educational facilities, multiple funding sources, every form of transportation, lower operating costs and a strong, experienced workforce, the Toledo/Northwest Ohio region has become a premier location for international investment.

2019 INTERNATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- Overseas travel to Germany, United Kingdom, Japan
- Foreign direct investment in Northwest Ohio attracted $1.3 billion along with 530 new jobs
Export Success

In 2019, the Regional Growth Partnership partnered with the Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce to lead the Export Success Mentoring Program helping local companies enter and navigate global markets, quickly and efficiently.

The 10-session course included 10 individuals representing area companies who learned under the guidance of a group of mentors with vast experience in the international market. Attendees participated in such topic discussions as:

- International Sales Process
- International Marketing, Banking, and Finance Issues
- How to Develop and Execute an Export Plan

The 2020 Export Success program is already under way.

“Before Export Success, we did not really have a plan. This program was the foundational building block to creating an export strategy.”

Dustin Schlachter, Owner, OBIC
The RGP’s content development efforts have served as the foundation for our lead-generation activities the last several years, which have produced exceptional results. The cornerstone of that content is video production – primarily case study/corporate executive testimonials on “Why Northwest Ohio.” In 2019 alone, the RGP produced nine new videos, which were incorporated into the organization’s targeted marketing outreach campaigns.

The three primary lead-generation initiatives last year included:

**SITE MARKETING**
Developed new web page featuring the top 24 sites across Northwest Ohio. Began marketing these sites individually to consultants and targeted companies.

RESULT: **320 NEW PROSPECTS**

**INDUSTRY TRADE**
Worked with Automotive News, a top-tier automotive trade publication, to distribute creative, valuable content to its subscribers. These subscribers were required to provide their contact information in order to receive the RGP content.

RESULT: **150 NEW PROSPECTS**

**DIGITAL INDUSTRY**
Ran three email campaigns, with very defined audiences, in the automotive, energy and logistics industries.

RESULT: **200 NEW PROSPECTS**
The Land of Opportunity

In 2019, the Federal Reserve Bank published a study showing Toledo as the No. 1 city in the country for Opportunity Occupations, defined as jobs which don't require a college degree but still pay at or above the national annual median wage of $37,690. The purpose of the study was to address that more than two-thirds of U.S. adults do not have college degrees — and then with that, recognize the success of communities in generating decent-paying job opportunities for non-grads.

To highlight that study, the Federal Reserve visited Toledo last summer to produce a documentary. The Regional Growth Partnership played the lead role in hosting the Federal Reserve and setting up interviews with businesses, training institutions and employees.

The Fed initially spent one week in Toledo canvassing the region. During that week, the RGP acted as a tour guide showcasing the business and cultural assets and amenities across the Toledo area. From that, the Fed determined who it needed to interview and which sites it needed to film. Approximately one month later, the Fed contingent came back to Toledo for another week to conduct those interviews. Ultimately, the Fed produced a 6-minute video focused entirely on Toledo. It will also soon roll out a series of Toledo-specific videos elevating the variety of demand-centered education and training pathways workers can take.
The Regional Growth Partnership’s content marketing, social media program continued upward through 2019 generating new content, new followers and heavy engagement with audiences. Since the launch of the RGP’s content marketing efforts in 2017, site traffic to the website through social media has jumped from 1% to 8%. Since the implementation of this program, LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter have become the primary social referral sources for the website, and one of the quickest ways to engage with site consultants. During the fourth quarter of 2019, a paid Social Media strategy was implemented, in conjunction with business development efforts for 2020, in order to further drive lead-generation initiatives.

**Socially Adept**

Site traffic to the website through social media has jumped from 1% to 8%
Talent Acquisition Services

To better support companies locating and expanding in Northwest Ohio with their hiring needs, the Regional Growth Partnership employs a Talent Acquisition Manager. This position comes through support of JobsOhio’s Talent Acquisition Program.

Focused on talent acquisition from a business perspective, this position works with the hiring company by providing a talent strategy tailored specifically to the operating environment, skill need and hiring deadlines of the business.

Services provided in 2019 to companies included:

- Marketing and Attraction Services
- Job Postings and Events
- Pre-screening Services
- Training Resources
- Sourcing Services

New Jobs Recruited in 2019

2,298

Program investment dollars in Northwest Ohio in 2019

$2.8 Billion
Site & Building Management

The Regional Growth Partnership takes a lead role in managing and promoting the 17-county region’s real estate inventory. In this role, the RGP proactively meets and cultivates relationships with community partners, commercial real estate brokers, property owners and construction companies to best understand the real estate properties, including challenges and opportunities.

Areas of focus and success from 2019:

- Site & Building Searches
- Proactive Site Visit Initiative
- JobsOhio Redevelopment Pilot Program
- SiteOhio
Northwest Ohio Workforce Initiative

In response to the needs of area businesses, the Regional Growth Partnership began working with Toledo MSA stakeholders to strategize and begin implementation of a collaborative workforce development strategy for our region. The RGP brought together Fulton, Lucas, Ottawa and Wood county workforce authorities, economic development practitioners and the Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce to address head-on the No. 1 priority for businesses.

- In process of setting outputs and outcomes, success metrics and asset mapping
- Initiative major part of a Malcolm Baldrige Communities of Excellence pursuit being undertaken by Toledo region
- Outreach and engagement will ultimately expand to all 17 counties
Kripke Enterprises

A long-standing local business with an equally long and successful track record recently completed the refurbishment and revitalization of a vacant facility for its new corporate headquarters and warehouse. Kripke Enterprises, a non-ferrous scrap brokerage company, credited JobsOhio’s loan and grant programs in its decision to acquire and rehab the building in Sylvania Township.
NSI Crankshaft

A world leader in the manufacturing of precision-machined crankshafts announced an expansion of its Fostoria plant to support new contract work with a major marine engine builder. Nippon Steel Integrated Crankshaft started in 2008 and currently employs 102 people. The company highlighted the region’s core manufacturing expertise as a critical factor in its decision to expand in Seneca County.

- Highly competitive project with Kentucky and Pennsylvania
- JobsOhio Grant supporting new machinery and equipment

33 New Jobs

$12 Mil Capital Investment
Nostrum Laboratories

A generic drug manufacturer in Williams County is expanding its facility to support new product development. Nostrum Laboratories is adding three new packaging lines and one new manufacturing suite, along with a 22,700 square-foot warehouse. Incentives and community support helped win project for the Bryan, Ohio, site.

- Area universities key draw for analytical and pharmaceutical talent
- Key partners included RGP, JobsOhio and WEDCO

40 New Jobs
$3.25 Mil Capital Investment
Driving Success Across Northwest Ohio

For more information about supporting economic development in Northwest Ohio, contact John Lippus:

lippus@rgp.org | 419-261-3871

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Investors

100%
Privately Funded

- Investors help drive Northwest Ohio’s economic development strategy
- Investors are afforded greater opportunities for engagement in business development activity
- American Electric Power
- Associated General Contractors of NW Ohio
- Block Communications, Inc. (BCI)
- Bowling Green State University
- BP North America
- Charter Communications
- Clark Schaefer Hackett
- Cleveland-Cliffs, Inc.
- Columbia Gas of Ohio
- Crown Battery
- Dana, Inc.
- Defiance College
- DGL Consulting Engineers, LLC
- Eastman & Smith, LTD.
- Fifth Third Bank
- First Solar
- Gilmore Jasion Mahler, LTD
- Gulfstream Development
- Huntington Bank
- Hylant Group
- Industrial Power Systems
- JobsOhio
- KeyBank
- Lourdes University
- MAGNA, International
- Mannik & Smith Group
- Marshall & Melhorn, LLC
- Medical Mutual of Ohio
- Mercy Health
- Massee
- NAI Harmon Group
- National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA), OH/MI Chapter & International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 8
- NSG Group
- North Star BlueScope Steel
- Ohio Logistics
- Ohio’s Electric Cooperatives
- Owens Community College
- Owens Corning
- Penta Career Center
- Plante Moran, PLLC
- Plastic Technologies, Inc.
- PNC Bank
- Poggemeyer Design Group
- ProMedica
- Rehmann
- Reiche | Klein Group
- RMF Nooter, Inc.
- Rudolph Libbe Inc.
- Shumaker
- Signature Bank, N.A.
- SSOE, Inc.
- The Andersons
- The JDI Group
- Toledo Edison, A FirstEnergy Company
- Toledo Molding & Die, Inc.
- Toledo–Lucas County Port Authority
- Toledo Refining Company, LLC
- TTI Associates Inc.
- University of Toledo
- Vorys Sater Seymour & Pease
- Weber Clark
- Wessler Engineering
- William Vaughan Company