



**Eau Claire Area Economic
Development Corporation**

2016 YEAR IN REVIEW



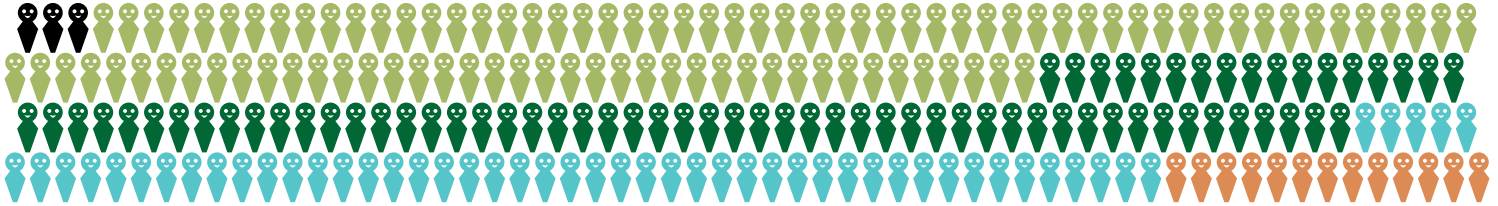
EDC's Community Impact

A snapshot of the EDC's work in 2016:

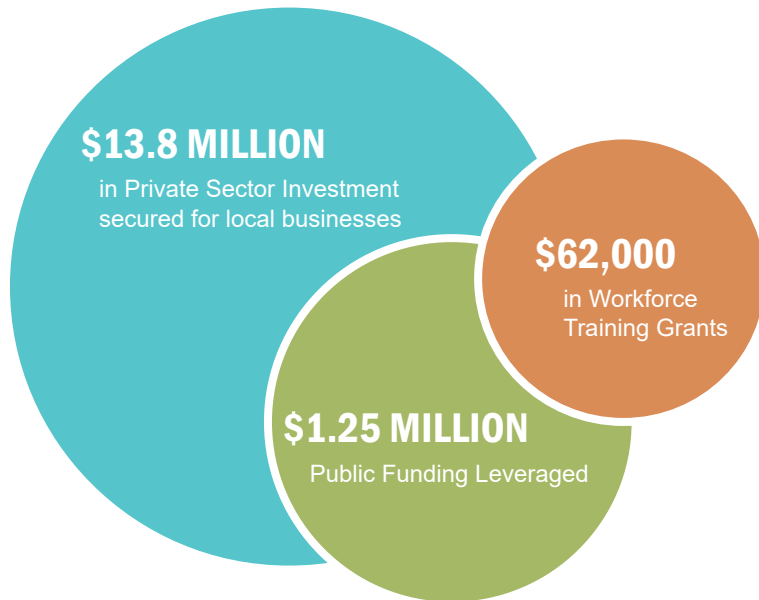
- 3 Full-Time Employees
- **104 jobs created** through EDC projects
- **71 Idea Challenge** applications received
- **50 BRE calls** on local businesses
- **13 Site Visits** from expanding or relocating companies

The Eau Claire Area EDC is a local non-profit private/public partnership that employs 3 full-time individuals who work to advance the economic prosperity through business and job growth in Altoona, Augusta, Eau Claire, Fairchild, and Fall Creek.

The Eau Claire Area EDC is staffed by Luke Hanson, Executive Director; Beryl Ouimette, Office and Graphics Manager; and Christina Wasson, Marketing Manager.



Securing Assistance for Our Businesses



The EDC works diligently to assist both established local businesses and new businesses with their needs, working towards our mission of advancing the economy in our communities.

In 2016, the EDC secured \$13.8 million in private sector investment for our local businesses to build and expand their operations. An additional \$1.25 million in public funding was leveraged through various state and regional programs.

Strengthening our workforce continues to be a priority, and the EDC assisted businesses in obtaining \$62,000 in workforce training grants.

SKILLS GAP SURVEY

For the third year, the Eau Claire Area EDC's Critical Talent Committee continued to partner with the Chippewa Falls EDC, Chippewa Falls Chamber of Commerce, Dunn County EDC, Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce, Menomonie Chamber of Commerce, and the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development to collect data on upcoming retirements and hard-to-fill positions in the Chippewa Valley.

Results of the 2016 Skills Gap Survey indicate a growing concern over the upcoming retirements, with 77% of the businesses reporting at least a moderate concern. 41% of these positions require at least 2 years of experience, and 38% require either an Associates or Bachelor's degree.

Upcoming retirements are not the only items that are concerning local businesses. 85% of employers have difficulty filling at least one position. Of these hard-to-fill positions, 42% require no experience, but 37% require at least 2 years of experience.





STARTUP 48

Eau Claire's premier startup weekend event, Startup 48 was held at JAMF in October of 2016. Here, over a dozen individuals came together, formed teams, and presented their plan for a startup to a panel of judges – all in just 48 hours.

Several ideas were pitched and all participants voted for their favorite startup ideas. Teams formed around the top three ideas: a smoothie bowl business, a local video sharing platform, and an app for answering the age-old question "where do you want to eat?" These teams worked for the next 48 hours to develop the idea into a viable startup.

Startup 48 was generously sponsored by Marshfield Clinic, Old National Bank, Powertex, and WiSys Technology Foundation. The grand prize winner of the 2016 Startup 48 was ZipTunes, who took home a prize package valued at over \$15,000 that included office space, marketing, web and app development and more.

EDC Committees

BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION

The EDC worked closely with the City of Eau Claire to perform 50 Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) calls with local businesses. The goal of BRE calls is to meet with businesses to share the resources available to them and assist them in reaching their goals, obtain an understanding of the market, and assist with the skills gaps in our community.

Additionally, the BRE committee assists the Eau Claire Area EDC with other initiatives including the Idea Challenge, Startup 48, and the Paragon Award.

BUSINESS RECRUITMENT

Introduction of the Industry Spotlight events. Three successful events were hosted in 2016:

- Overview of Eau Claire's Industrial Parks
- Gateway Industrial Park/ Dynamic Fabrication and Fitness
- Banbury Place/ Wisconsin Independent Network

These events were all sponsored by Royal Credit Union and Wells Fargo.

Additionally, Luke Hanson attended the International Manufacturing Tradeshow in Chicago where he had meetings with 12 different companies to further relationship development.

CRITICAL TALENT

Engaging with the community is a priority for the Critical Talent Committee. The EDC manages YourFutureChippewaValley.com, a free website for educators and businesses to connect high-school students with career-based learning experiences. In 2016, YourFutureChippewaValley.com was upgraded to improve the user interface, metrics and ease of use.

Additional local initiative groups that Critical Talent engages with include: Momentum West's Talent Attraction Committee, the Chippewa Valley Youth Apprenticeship Consortium through CESA 10, Coalition for Citizen Engagement & Public Education, and Business and Workforce Development Committee with the Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce.



COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The EDC works with many private and public sector partners to facilitate the economic vitality of our community. Some of initiatives in 2016 include:

- 2016 Paragon Award, sponsored by Royal Credit Union, awarded to Action City for their expansion and community engagement
- 2016 Idea Challenge, sponsored by Northwestern Bank, awarded to Dennis Kinsel for his innovative shelving idea
- The Fireball Run, a travel show that highlights the under-discovered locations of America, and brings over 100 business leaders and industry decision makers to our community. Additionally, Eau Claire will have a team in the upcoming season - sponsored by Xcel Energy

The Eau Claire Area
Economic Development
Corporation would like to
thank all our numerous
sponsors, investors,
community partners,
and volunteers for your
support.

It is because of your
generosity that we are
able to continue to find
success in our mission of
promoting the economic
vitality of our communities.

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