



"MAKE THE CLARION CALL"

Vol. 26, June 2010

Clarion County Economic Development Corporation
21 North 6th Avenue, Clarion, PA 16214
814.226.9045
www.callclarionpa.com



Additional Stimulus Funds Available to Help Local Businesses!

Robert A Cardamone, Executive Director of Community Action, Inc. announced **additional funds are available** for eligible industries in Clarion and Jefferson Counties who have been negatively affected by the economic downturn.

During the past two months, the Business Employment Stability and Training (BESAT) project has worked with **12 local businesses** to hire or recall **25 positions** in Clarion and Jefferson Counties. Because of the tremendous success of this project, Community Action, Inc. has worked to make additional funds available for this project. Funds are limited and businesses thinking about hiring additional staff or recalling staff should **contact Community Action, Inc. quickly!**

The BESAT project provides financial assistance to offset the wages and benefits associated with employing additional or previously laid off employees, or to offset wages and benefits for an employee to receive training that enables them to receive a higher wage. Specifically, the project will reimburse the employer **50%** of an employee's wages and benefits for up to 90 days.

The BESAT Project is made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and the collaboration of Community Action, Inc., the CareerLinks of Clarion and Jefferson Counties, Punxsutawney Area Chamber of Commerce, Clarion Area Chamber of Business and Industry, Clarion County Economic Development Corporation and the Jefferson County Department of Development.

For more information or to apply online, please visit www.jccap.org. If you have any questions, please contact Greg Sands, Project Manager, at 1-814-938-3302, ext. 250 or via email at gsands@jccap.org.

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FEATURED RESOURCE PARTNER



**Small Business Development Center
Clarion University**

Helping businesses start, grow, and prosper.

The Clarion University of Pennsylvania's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is an entrepreneurial program that provides professional and high-quality business consulting services to pre-venture and existing small businesses throughout our 10-counties of Armstrong, Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Potter, and Venango Counties.

Business success requires both sufficient capital and the knowledge to use it wisely. **SBDC consultants help entrepreneurs** develop the planning, management, and financial skills necessary to make their business thrive. The SBDC's one-on-one management consulting emphasizes education and guidance in finding **practical solutions to business problems**. Consulting is **confidential** and **provided at no charge** by a staff of skilled professionals. Areas of consulting included but are not limited to: loan packaging, business planning, management and marketing assistance, environmental management and energy efficiency, and long and short-term growth strategies. Funding for the SBDC is provided by Clarion University of Pennsylvania, the Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, enabling the SBDC to provide its services at no cost.

Despite the economic implications for small business owners in 2009, the Clarion SBDC helped 61 clients raise over \$18 million in start-up and expansion capital. Our consultants assisted 527 clients with producing solid business plans, analyzing markets and identifying commercial funding sources and those agencies that handle government loans. The sources of financing secured by our clients included commercial bank loans, county and community loans and state loans. An example of how our services impact local businesses occurred with the recent renovation and expansion of Dairy Queen in Shippenville. Mary Livengood, one of the DQ owners, was referred to the SBDC by Brad Ehrhart of the Clarion County Economic Development Corporation. The SBDC assisted Ms. Livengood with the development of financial projections to determine the feasibility of the project and to qualify for low interest rate financing through the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The SBDC also provided an onsite energy efficiency assessment to help determine what equipment should be replaced. With the increased size of the facility and increase in the business volume, the business has hired 12 additional full-time equivalent employees for a total of 26 employees.

Recently the SBDC relocated to the Gregory Barnes Center, 330 North Point Drive, Clarion, Pennsylvania near Exit 62 of Interstate 80. This new location enables the SBDC be more convenient and accessible to individuals and businesses in need of our services. The SBDC also has a new training room that accommodates 30 people and is equipped with a 15 station computer lab that was designed for training on E-commerce and website development as well as other specialized computer software training. In 2009 the SBDC conducted 116 educational programs throughout the year with 1,729 attendees that focused on a variety of small business topics.

The Clarion University SBDC's hours of operation are Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. You may contact us by calling (814) 393-2060 or toll-free 1-877-292-1843. For more information on the SBDC you can view our website at www.clarion.edu/sbdc.

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FEATURED SUCCESS STORY

Clarion Small Business Development Center & Riverhill, Inc.



The owners of the local Dairy Queen Franchise finally saw over two years of planning become a reality!

The business opened its doors on April 19th, 2010 after completing a major expansion and renovation project of their facilities over a four month period. The franchise was converted from a Dairy Queen Brazier to the new Grill & Chill theme. A 16-foot addition was added to the back of the existing building to provide additional work space for the employees plus a 15 foot addition to the front of the existing building to provide for an indoor lobby and eating area. The lobby area also has a display area for frozen cakes and ice cream treats. In addition, an outdoor patio was added in front with three tables.

The Clarion County Dairy Queen franchise is owned and operated by Mary Jo and Jack Livengood, Lisa Livengood, and Kim Carroll. According to Mary Jo Livengood, “You wouldn’t believe all the planning and time that goes into a major renovation project”. The owners have operated the franchise year-round and are glad to be able to finally provide an indoor area for patrons to get out of the cold weather during the winter months.

Mary Jo Livengood was referred to the Small Business Development Center in January 2009 by Brad Ehrhart, Director of the Clarion County Economic Development Corporation and coordinator of the project. Assistance to the Company was provided by Amy J. Keth, Clarion SBDC Business Analyst, in the form of developing detailed financial projections of the project. This allowed the principals to determine the project feasibility and to qualify for low interest financing through the state. The Small Business Development Center Environmental Management Assistance Program (EMAP) provided an on-site energy efficiency assessment as well that helped them determine what equipment should be replaced. Financing for the project was provided by First United National Bank and the Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission in Oil City.

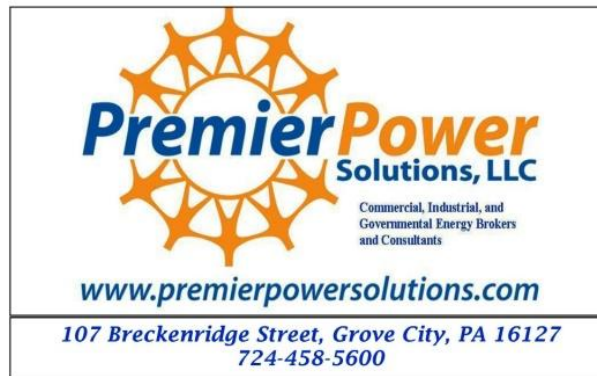
Due to the increased size of the facility and increased business volume, the owners have hired 12 additional full-time equivalent employees for a total of 26 employees to kick-off the summer season.

“We appreciate all the advice and encouragement of the SBDC,” stated Mary Jo Livengood.



Before and after recent renovations

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Shopping for Electricity

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission has published the fact that they expect electricity rates in Penelec to increase by as much as 22% beginning January 1, 2011. If you shop for an alternate provider for your electric service, you will be able to eliminate a substantial portion of this expected increase.

If you have the resources and expertise, this is a task that you can take on yourself.

Alternatively, you may want to consider help from a licensed consultant or company experienced in this field. Most consultants work very similar to your insurance broker, collecting their fee/commission only if they find you a rate that you are happy with and you sign a contract.

When interviewing a consultant, you should: 1) check for *experience* in the industry, 2) ask what their *commission* will be, 3) choose a *local company* with local presence, and 4) verify that they are *licensed* with the PA PUC.

The industry is flooded with telemarketers and fly by-night companies that are looking to make a quick buck. We recommend that you find a company and individuals that you trust and know will be there in the future.

For more information on electricity deregulation and the impact that it will have on your business, contact Diana Keisel at Premier Power Solutions dkeisel@trustpps.com or 814-282-9241.

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FEATURED CLARION COUNTY AVAILABLE SITE

Clarion County Commerce Center



- Located on Pennsylvania Route 338 one and half miles from Exit 53 of Interstate Route 80.
- 77 acres located in a Pennsylvania Keystone Opportunity Zone that is available to eligible park occupants for 10-years.
- 12,500-volt electric service provided by Penelec/First Energy.
- 4-inch natural gas line service supplied by UGI Central Penn Gas.
- Telecommunications provided by Windstream.
- Sewer provided by the Borough of Knox
- Public Water (non potable)
- Beaver Township does not have zoning.
- The Clarion County Airport and Clarion University are just minutes away from this park.

For more information please contact Brad Ehrhart, Clarion County Economic Development Corporation, at (814) 226-9045 or e-mail at brad@callclarionpa.com .

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FEATURED CLARION COUNTY AVAILABLE BUILDING

Available Warehouse, 3377 Brookville Street, Hawthorn PA, 16230



- Located on Pennsylvania Route 28 sixteen miles from Exit 78 of Interstate Route 80.
- The warehouse is 90,000 square feet and it is located on 15 acres. It is available for sale or for lease. The main building could be sub-divided. The building was built in 1974, and it is masonry block construction. The floors are 6" of concrete. There are also 2 floors of finished office space. Included in the property is a garage and maintenance facility measuring 60' x 100'. In the aerial shot of the property, the warehouse is in the center of the picture and the maintenance building is located to the left.
- The warehouse ceiling heights are from 18 feet to 16 feet. The building has 17 truck docks.
- There are heaters hung throughout the warehouse so heating the space is possible. Power is available through Allegheny Power. It has a 1600 amp service and 3 phase feed. There is a natural gas well on the property and gas is available at below market value. The local municipality provides water and sewage is on the property. Fire protection is available with a sprinkler system.
- Telecommunications provided by Windstream and/or Comcast.
- For more information please contact David Sayers at (814) 849-5789 ext. 407 or dsayers@mccauleytrucking.com.

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Newsletter Links!

Barnes Center at Clarion University, www.clarion.edu/barnescenter

Center for eBusiness and Advanced IT - <http://www.ebizitpa.org> (Click on Program Events)

Clarion Area Chamber of Business and Industry - <http://www.clarionpa.com/events/index.php>

The Clarion Career Link Center - <http://www.clarioncareerlink.org>

CUP Continuing Education Events/Classes - <http://www.clarion.edu/ce>

CUP SBDC Events/Classes/Workshops - www.clarion.edu/SBDC/Classes.asp

Keystone Community Education Council - <http://www.keystonecec.org/newsletter.htm>

Redbank Valley Chamber of Commerce - <http://newbethlehemarea.com/events>

The Northwest Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center, Inc. - <http://www.nwirc.org>

Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission
<http://www.nwcommission.org/northwest.html>

Northwest Pennsylvania Workforce Development - <http://www.nwpawib.org>

PA Department of Community and Economic Development Newsletter:
<http://www.newpa.com/default.aspx?id=266>

Penn State Cooperative Extension & Outreach - <http://www.extension.psu.edu>

PennTAP-Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program - <http://www.penntap.psu.edu>

Penn State University DuBois - Continuing Education - <http://www.ds.psu.edu/ce>