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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



Contacts: Ryan McCrady
President, Economic Development Corporation of Decatur - Macon County
PH: 217-422-9520
E: rmccrady@decaturedc.com

Craig Rost
Executive Director, Champaign County Economic Development Corporation
PH: 217-359-6261
E: craig@champaigncountyledc.org

Decatur, Champaign EDCs Announce Partnership

DECATUR, IL, April 19, 2017 – Businesses in the Decatur area now have local access to the most comprehensive small business assistance network in the United States. Officials from the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) of Decatur – Macon County and Champaign County EDC announced the expansion of the Illinois Small Business Development Center and International Trade Center.

“Strategic relationships with quality organizations like the Champaign County EDC will bring additional resources to benefit businesses in the Decatur community,” said Ryan McCrady, President of the EDC of Decatur – Macon County. “This will also help improve the economic development opportunities in all of Central Illinois. Combining the unique assets of Macon and Champaign counties will create a formidable presence with respect to business attraction and expansion in the region.”

The Champaign County EDC hosts the Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in the region, and with the new partnership these services will be offered on a regular basis through the Decatur EDC. Led by Don Elmore, the SBDC assists in job creation, supports entrepreneurship, business start-up, expansion, productivity, and works to sharpen small business management in the region. The EDCs and partners accomplish this through one-on-one counseling, technical assistance, training seminars, information provision, networking opportunities and business development and real estate expertise.

The vast exporting capabilities of the Midwest Inland Port bring the need for additional services to be offered locally through the International Trade Center (ITC). ITC provides support in evaluating a company’s readiness to export, shipping and logistics, compliance regulations, international business planning, and more. Headed by certified International Trade Specialist, Kathie Cravens, ITC is uniquely qualified to provide a wide range of assistance in all aspects of international trade and export assistance. From in-depth advice on international trade techniques to export processes and international market opportunities, the ITC can play an advisory role at no cost.

“The Illinois Small Business Development Center at Champaign County EDC is thrilled to provide business development and international trade services through the EDC of Decatur & Macon County and the Midwest Inland Port,” said Craig Rost, Executive Director of Champaign County EDC. “Our counties comprise a regional workforce and business environment in Central Illinois - working together will develop new business and employment growth in our communities and enhance an already strong regional workforce, which in turn will attract new employers to our counties.”

Decatur based manufacturing company T/CCI has been utilizing the services of the International Trade Services for several years. “At first, I was driving to Wisconsin for exporting seminars,” said Shirley Leevy, Inventory/Logistics Manager for T/CCI. “The requirements and forms to export are constantly changing and a company needs expert guidance to stay up-to-date on what you need to know and what you need to meet to export your company’s goods. Having access to these resources in Decatur will be a huge benefit to local businesses and will save the expense in both money and time from traveling elsewhere for the training seminars.”

An Illinois SBDC “*Starting Your Business in Illinois*” workshop will be held at the Decatur EDC office on May 11th from 9-11 AM, and on May 25th from 2-4 PM. Attendees must RSVP by contacting carly@champaigncountyedc.org or 217-359-6261.

Both the SBDC and the ITC will have regularly scheduled appointment sessions at the Decatur EDC office. The Illinois Small Business Development Center at Champaign County EDC is funded through a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Small Business Administration, Illinois Department of Commerce, and the Champaign County Economic Development Corporation; with additional support provided by EDC of Decatur and Macon County and the Midwest Inland Port.

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About the Economic Development Corporation of Decatur and Macon County

The Economic Development Corporation of Decatur & Macon County is a nonprofit public-private partnership responsible for non-retail business attraction, expansion and retention efforts in Decatur & Macon County. Composed of a combination of leading private sector employers, labor, educational institutions and a variety of governmental bodies, the EDC is uniquely positioned to address the needs of Macon County’s existing business and employer base along with prospective businesses looking to locate in and around the Decatur, Illinois area. The EDC works with local, state and federal partners to provide economic, technical and training assistance to businesses in the Macon County area. For more information, visit www.DecaturEDC.com.

About the Midwest Inland Port

The Midwest Inland Port is a multi-modal hub located in Decatur, Illinois that delivers both domestic and international flexibility for companies through a well-positioned transportation corridor, connecting the Midwest to the East, West and Gulf Coasts of North America. Strategically located, the port consists of 3 Class I railroads, an intermodal ramp, quick access to 5 major roadways and an airport equipped with a U.S. Customs Office and runways capable of handling wide-body aircraft. With a market reach of 95 million people within a 1-day’s truck drive, it’s no surprise Decatur was ranked 3rd in the nation as an Emerging Logistics and Distribution Center by Facilities Magazine. For more information, visit www.MidwestInlandPort.com.

About the Champaign County Economic Development Corporation

The Champaign County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) is a public-private partnership dedicated to fostering a cooperative, county-wide approach to economic development. The EDC brings together community leaders to support Champaign County economic development by aligning interests through productive relationships, open dialogue, and advocacy that supports primary employer job growth and retention, including managing programs and campaigns such as Made in Champaign County and You’re Welcome CU. Learn more at <http://www.champaigncountyedc.org/>