

## Economic Development Insight

### Business Expansion Case Study - SAIC

By Joan Bethell

We've all heard the expression, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." This relates to economic development in the form of business retention, and its progress into business expansion. Basically, we need to take care of and appreciate what we have and, when needed, help them to grow.

In addition to efforts to attract new businesses, cultivate entrepreneurship and promote new business start-ups, business retention and expansion programs are designed to assist businesses to increase their competitiveness, help them survive economic difficulties, keep them from relocating elsewhere and, most importantly, assist them with expansions that add new jobs.

Recently, GCEDC launched its *Industry Forum* program to provide a comfortable way for the local industrial businesses to network with each other, encourage local business-to-business interaction, present pertinent information about topics that will impact their business and an opportunity for the hosting business to showcase its operations by providing attendees with a plant tour.

As a result of our first meeting, three local companies started discussions on a collaborative project and the larger companies that are already contracted to do business with the Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) at Crane have asked for any small (one man, even) machine shops and welders interested in sub-contract work to be invited to the next meeting.

Fortunately, regardless of the economic recession, the defense industry is thriving and NSWC Crane is well-positioned to actually increase its workload. As it is the strongest economic driver in the Indiana Southwest region, Greene County businesses that are currently under contract to Crane are reaping the benefits.

Such is the case with Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), a Fortune 500 company with a worldwide staff of more than 44,000 personnel and a strong local presence for over 21 years, having been a part of the community since 1988. SAIC is recognized as a leading research and engineering company that can solve a broad array of important customer business and mission-critical problems.

SAIC provides the Naval Surface Warfare Center Crane Division (NSWC Crane) with innovative, leading edge technical solutions for full life cycle support in the areas of Special Missions, Strategic Missions, and Electronic Warfare/Information Operations. SAIC also supports NSWC Crane Mission and Product Areas as well as the Naval Support Activity Crane.

Consequently, SAIC has added to its numerous facilities in Bloomfield and the surrounding area that total approximately 130,000 square feet and will be celebrating the grand opening of its brand new 37,800 sq.ft. headquarters, engineering and integration facility at the WestGate@Crane Technology Park this week. This facility houses a staff of approximately 200 persons.

## Economic Development Insight

SAIC has been a leader in the development of the tech park since 2004, has invested over \$2.4 million in its new facility and is already considering an additional building for location in the tech park.

So, what does all this mean to the local business environment? Well, Although SAIC excels at finding the unique, high tech professionals NSWC Crane needs to support the War fighter, SAIC places an emphasis on hiring local people first whenever possible and already has more than 400 employees living throughout the tri-county tech park's region of Greene, Martin and Daviess counties, with a local payroll in excess of \$30 million. Add to this direct impact the numerous secondary jobs (sales and services) that are created, throughout Greene County and Bloomfield especially, to support this activity and it becomes clear how much of a tremendous impact SAIC has on the local economy.

Greene County Economic Development Corporation board and staff wish to extend congratulations to Science Applications International Corporation on its continued growth and, on behalf of the entire Greene County community, wish to express our appreciation of its decision to locate in this region.

*Joan Bethell is the executive director at Greene County Economic Development Corporation and can be reached at (812) 847-4500 or [jbethell@gcedc.us](mailto:jbethell@gcedc.us)*