Gourmet Foods International Chooses Kenosha County For Its First Midwest Location

Gourmet Foods International (GFI), an Atlanta-based cheese distributor, has purchased a building in the Business Park of Kenosha after searching the greater Chicagoland Area for a site for its new food distribution facility.

“We are very excited to finally have a warehouse in Wisconsin and Kenosha is the best spot in the state for our future plans,” said Doug Jay, President of Gourmet Foods International.

“Kenosha County is thrilled to welcome Gourmet Foods,” said Kenosha County Executive Jim Kreuser. “Southeast Wisconsin is one of the best locations in the nation for advanced food processors. Gourmet Foods is in good company and we look forward to helping them thrive here.”

The 35,200-square-foot building will be GFI’s first Midwest location and will allow the company to service the Milwaukee, Chicago and Minneapolis markets as well as all points in between. The company plans to have up to 50 employees at the location, previously occupied by Process Retail Group, within the next two years.

Gourmet Foods International is a specialty food and gourmet cheese supplier with distribution centers across the United States. The new site in Kenosha, Gourmet Foods International Midwest, LLC, will be its seventh location nation-wide.

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) awarded GFI $200,000 in Economic Development Tax Credits to support Gourmet Foods’ investment. The Kenosha Area Business Alliance (KABA), provided $1.1 million financing. This includes a $1 million low-interest loan and a $100,000 forgivable

continued on page 4 >
Back in 2009, the company I work for, Uline, moved its World Headquarters from Illinois to Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin. It was one of the best business decisions we’ve made. We love the cohesion and unity among business, government, and educational leaders. We love the positive energy and “can do” attitude. And, perhaps most significantly, we love the high quality workforce. Kenosha County workers want to work, respect the value of having good jobs, are well educated, and are exceptionally capable. Like so many other companies, we are delighted to expand our Kenosha presence as we take advantage of the many advantages this community offers.

Of course, like most area companies, we are worried about whether the employment needs of expanding and newly located companies will soon outstrip the area talent pool. I’m thrilled that KABA had the foresight to engage with the W.E. Upjohn Institute to conduct a labor market analysis. I’m always in favor of getting solid data as a starting point in analyzing potential risks. I also know that we still send thousands of highly qualified employees from Kenosha County to outlying communities each day. This is a huge pool of existing talent that is right under our nose, just waiting to be harvested.

Of course, longer term, it is critical that we have outstanding educational programs in Kenosha County as we prepare our homegrown talent for meaningful employment in this community. That’s why I’m so excited about two recent initiatives:

1. The Strive program is a proven model that has brought educational excellence to numerous communities throughout the U.S. This program seeks to unify business, education, government and non-profits around metric-specific improvements in our educational programs and workforce development. This seems like such a natural for us, in Kenosha, as we have already shown a proven ability to rally around challenges and create winning solutions. The Chrysler plant closure is a great example of this. If you don’t know much about Strive, I’d encourage you to do some research, or contact the KABA staff.

2. Hats off to Dr. Bryan Albrecht at Gateway Technical College regarding a potential “promise program”, whereby scholarships and/or funding would be made available for any area, qualifying student to attend Gateway. Talk about putting your money where your mouth is - here’s a great way to ensure that every area student is given the opportunity to get the advanced skills and training that the local employers require.

You’ll be reading more and more about these and other programs in the coming months. We can complain about talent shortages, or we can take active steps as we continue to produce a best-of-class workforce. We can complain about talent shortages, or we can take active steps as we continue to produce a best-of-class workforce. We can:\n
**ALLIANT ENERGY**

A Madison-based energy company that provides electric and natural gas services throughout Iowa and Wisconsin.

**Arvato (formerly Sonopress)**

A CD and DVD replication business with operations in Pleasant Prairie.

**Compass Minerals**

(formerly North American Salt) A leading producer of minerals, including salt, magnesium chloride, sulfate of potash and other plant nutrition products. Headquartered in Overland, KS with operations in Kenosha.

**MedTorque, Inc.**

Specializes in close tolerance precision machined instrumentation and implants for the medical industry. Affiliated with Inland Midwest Corporation in Chicago.

**Scherrer Construction Company**

**Thank you for investing in KABA!**

**KABA Member News & Notes**

**The Bristol Group, LLC expands services**

The Bristol Group (TBG) recently announced the expansion of its service offerings to now include Landscape Architecture as part of its design/build practice in the Kenosha area. Benjamin Himschoot, RLA, who has been working with TBG for the past two years, recently received his license to practice Landscape Architecture in both Wisconsin and Illinois. Projects designed and built by TBG this year include re-landscaping around the historic SC Johnson Headquarters building in Racine, and Asyst Technologies building expansion in Pleasant Prairie.

**Clark Dietz welcomes Jim Tostenson, PE**

Jim Tostenson, PE has joined Clark Dietz’s mechanical/electrical group as a senior project manager. Jim brings over 25 years of experience managing and designing electrical systems for industrial processes, power systems, and controls. Jim has worked in a variety of industrial contexts including, manufacturing, oil and gas, and iron ore mining.

**MedTorque Announces European Launch Of TRI-GEAR™ Surgical Ratchets**

MedTorque, Inc. announced in December the European launch of their TRI-GEAR™ silicone handle ratchets for use in orthopedic and spine surgeries. The products recently received CE Mark approval, allowing the company to begin marketing and selling MedTorque TRI-GEAR™ ratchets in Europe and other countries that require the CE Mark. MedTorque is a manufacturer of silicone handle instruments for the orthopedics industry.

**Snap-on Museum wins award from ENR Midwest Magazine**

In November, the Snap-on Museum project, built by Riley Construction, was honored with a Best Projects Award of Merit in Renovation/Restoration from Engineering News-Record Midwest Magazine at a ceremony in Chicago. This is the fourth award this project has been honored with.

Update: Kenosha County Labor Study

The W.E. Upjohn Institute has completed the first phase of a regional labor market study for Kenosha County. KABA and Upjohn hosted three workshops which engaged 60+ companies in a series of three workshops to gain a deeper understanding of our area’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges.

The research team is designing two online surveys to be administered in February. One survey will be deployed to the local workforce working within the County, and the other will be targeted at individuals who commute out of Kenosha County for employment. A plan to unveil the results is planned for Spring of 2016. More details about the event will be available soon.

KABA and its partners – the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, the Kenosha County Job Center, Gateway Technical College, UW-Parkside and Carthage College – commissioned the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research to conduct the study. It was launched in September 2015 and the full report and summary of the findings are expected in first quarter 2016.

**SURVEY LAUNCHES FEB. 1**

The W.E. Upjohn Institute’s survey for Kenosha County employees is intended to capture information regarding job satisfaction, reasons for changing jobs, and commuting patterns to/from work. The survey will be shared with employers to distribute to their non-temporary, permanent employees on or around February 1st, and remain open through the beginning of March. The survey will be offered in both English and Spanish. Survey responses will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. Please direct any questions to Brooke Infusino at 262-605-1100.
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WEDC restructure incentives; introduces Business Development Tax Credits

As of January 1, 2016, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) will begin accepting applications for the new Business Development Tax Credit Program. As the Manufacturing and Agriculture Tax Credit has been phased in, WEDC, KABA and other state-wide economic development agencies have seen a significant reduction in demand for the existing Economic Development Tax Credits. These credits were non-refundable and therefore of limited use to a company with little or no tax liability.

The new Business Development Tax Credits are refundable, meaning that if a company is authorized to receive a quantity of tax credits that exceeds its tax liability, the business can receive a refund for the difference.

Businesses can receive tax credits for activities including job creation, training, capital investment and corporate headquarters location or retention. Tax credits can only be claimed for job creation over and above a company’s previously existing employment base in Wisconsin.

Through the new program, tax credits will be allocated on a calendar year, rather than a fiscal year, basis. Applications will open Jan. 1 and close Dec. 31, or when tax credits budgeted for the year have been allocated, whichever comes first.

Almost 375 people celebrated this year’s outstanding class of winners at the UW-Parkside Student Center Ballroom. Thank you to all who attended, our deserving winners, partners and sponsors: Johnson Bank, Johnson Insurance, UW-Parkside, BizTimes Media, CliftonLarsonAllen and We Energies.

The 2015 Kenosha County Business Excellence Award Winners: > Business of the Year: ASYST Technologies, LLC > Small Business of the Year: Specialized Accounting Services, LLC > Entrepreneur of the Year: Kurt Penn, Good Foods Group, LLC > Fast Five: Hanna Cylinders, LLC; Kenall Manufacturing; Kenosha Kingfish Baseball Club; Mobile One/McTernan Wireless and Quest Products, Inc.

To see videos and pictures from the event, find KABA on Youtube & Facebook: KABACOnnectHere.

Gourmet Foods International, cont.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Recap: 2015 Kenosha County Business Excellence Awards

On November 5, KABA and the the Kenosha Area Chamber of Commerce hosted the 11th Annual Kenosha County Business Excellence Awards.

The M7 launches the Export Development Grant Program

The Milwaukee 7 (M7), in collaboration with JPMorgan Chase, is offering the Export Development Grant Program to help manufacturers, companies selling a proprietary product line, and service-based companies grow in international trade. The Export Development Grant Program will award matching funds of up to $5,000 to companies in Southeastern Wisconsin, both new to export as well as existing exporters, to take advantage of opportunities in international markets and to overcome obstacles.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE

Companies must be located within the seven-county region consisting of: Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington or Waukesha. Preference will be given to small- and medium-sized enterprises (SME’s) with less than 500 employees.

WHAT THE GRANT COVERS

Grant awards must be used to support the company’s growth into new or existing international markets. Awards can be used for services and programs including but not limited to:

> Marketing > Compliance > Business Development > Education > Financing > Consulting

WHEN APPLICATIONS ARE DUE


Apply or learn more at mk7.com/exporting.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

KABA Portfolio Update

In November 2015 KABA’s Finance Committee approved financing in the amount of $1,100,000 for Gourmet Foods International Midwest, LLC. KABA’s funds will be used to purchase equipment and a vacant building in the Business Park of Kenosha. Purchase of the building will help GFI Midwest to establish a physical presence in the Midwest market. KABA will use the funds from its EDA and CITY revolving loan funds, as well as the High Impact forgivable loan fund, that was established to promote economic development.

JobCenterofWisconsin.com revamped; additional improvements planned

In September, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) launched a newly revamped JobCenterofWisconsin.com. The greatly enhanced, mobile-responsive site features new, dynamic tools that enable users to develop skills-based job postings and resumes and conduct advanced talent and job searches. It also features a redesigned Labor Market Information System (LMIS) landing page that highlights the most requested reports and data that our labor market experts offer. The LMIS now uses the latest available data to connect talent with job postings based on skills.

Take the KABA Wage & Salary Surveys to get valuable local wage data

KABA members are invited to participate in KABA’s annual Wage & Salary Surveys in partnership with MRA. Member companies that participate will receive the results for FREE - a $1,050 value. Use the results to attract and retain the talent you need.

The schedule for participation in the 2016 surveys is:

> Industrial Survey (includes 223 hourly production jobs) January 26 – March 18
> Office, Clerical & Technical Survey (includes 161 jobs) February 23 – April 15
> Managerial Survey (includes 287 mang. & professional jobs) February 23 – April 15

Survey results will be available in spring/summer. Survey participation is limited to KABA members only.

If you would like to participate, please contact Lisa Felton at felton@kaba.org.

KABAConnectHere.

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Loan from the Kenosha County High Impact Fund, which was created and funded by Kenosha County to support high quality economic development projects.

"Adding a Kenosha distribution facility to its national network, Gourmet Foods leverages Wisconsin’s strong food production history, ongoing industry innovation and unmatched workforce," said Mark Hogan, Secretary and CEO of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.

GFI purchased the building at 9629 59th Place in August 2015 and has been remodeling it to fit its specific needs. GFI plans to be operational by March. The site has an additional 3.3 acres for future expansion.

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Through the new program, tax credits will be allocated on a calendar year, rather than a fiscal year, basis. Applications will open Jan. 1 and close Dec. 31, or when tax credits budgeted for the year have been allocated, whichever comes first. A total of $17 million has been budgeted for Business Development Tax Credits in calendar year 2016, and $22 million in calendar 2017, in the biennial state budget.

For more information about the Business Development Tax Credit Program, contact Heather Wessling - KABA’s Vice President of Economic Development - twessling@kaba.org or 262.925.3467. You may also visit the WEDC website at InWisconsin.com/grow/assistance/btc.

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KABA Scholarships Available!

KABA is pleased to announce the 2016 Catalysis2Careers scholarships program for Kenosha County high school seniors who will attend Carthage College or UW-Parkside in the fall semester. Scholarships are awarded to those students who intend to pursue a major or career path in math, science, technology, medicine, engineering, business, finance or accounting.

To be eligible for either scholarship, you must submit your application for admission and other supporting materials to either college by the appropriate deadlines. Scholarship application details can be found here:

- Carthage College - Freshmen admissions and scholarship deadline is March 1, 2016. Find details at carthage.edu/admissions/scholarships
- UW-Parkside - Freshmen must be admitted by February 1, 2016. Application for admission as the initial application for scholarships and grants. Find details at uwp.edu/apply/payingforschool/scholarships

KTEC actively integrates technology into its curriculum and encourages students to use technology whenever possible and appropriate. One such program the entire school participates in is the Computer Science Education Week expands into month-long coding program with support from local business.

At KTEC, Computer Science Education Week expands into month-long coding program with support from local business.

The importance of having a vision | By Mike Pollocoff

When an organization focus their time and attention on community goals, their work becomes a reality. Whether you believe in the power of intention, the law of attraction, or big audacious goals…having a vision and a focus will funnel our energy towards that end. Within an organizational context, importance lies not only in having a vision, but in having a shared vision based on shared values.

Trust in leadership is planted like a seed when a vision is shared with others; sprouted once a path towards the vision has been planned; and it grows with every interaction as step by step the team works to make the vision a reality.

Each member of your team helps further define the vision. The team assembles a plan and acts methodically, step by step, to carry out the plan. A good plan leads the way, and a leader’s role is to keep the team true to the vision, ensuring that the plan carries forward consistently over time. The ability to listen and place information into the context of the larger view, patience, the ability to step back and assess, adjust and move forward are all made possible when you begin with the end in mind, when you have a vision.

Michael Pollocoff has been the Village Administrator and lead visionary at the Village of Pleasant Prairie since 1985.
Wisconsin healthcare system is a key efficiency and has some of the highest return to work rates for workers comp cases. Wisconsin’s health care system is a key competitive advantage for Wisconsin and Kenosha County.

Wisconsin has a highly integrated health care system, where hospitals clinics and health plans work together as a strong network. It consistently ranks high in the nation in quality and efficiency and has some of the highest return to work rates for workers comp cases. Wisconsin’s health care system is a key competitive advantage for Wisconsin and Kenosha County.

Wisconsin is ranked in the top 25% of the nation for health system performance.

Source: Commonwealth Fund Scorecard of State Health System Performance.

Payments for hospital care in SE WI increased at a rate less than half the national avg.

Payments for hospital care in southeastern Wisconsin increased at a rate less than half the national average from 2003-2014. That is a big swing from ten years ago when Milwaukee-area health care costs and insurance premiums were much higher than the Midwest average. Bottom line: health care payments in Southeast Wisconsin are not going up as fast as the rest of the country. One of the main reasons: The region's six adult acute-care health care systems are doing a better job of controlling costs, according to the study conducted by the Greater Milwaukee Business Foundation on Health, which was released in December.

The Federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has ranked Wisconsin health care among the very best since 2005.

Prevention is key to controlling health care costs. In Kenosha County, Aurora Health Care provides a variety of employer services, including the Aurora ACO, Occupational Health (OH), Wellness, Employee Assistance Programs and On-Site clinics to more than 200 Kenosha Area employers. Learn more at auroheaployersolutions.org.

“Employers need an effective occupational health program that puts employees first. At Aurora, our patient-centric approach starts with understanding the workplace environment. We work with employers to ensure that the employees will be safe from the time of hire through any work related injuries or illnesses. Our OH physicians are available for consultation on a variety of work related topics and our worker’s compensation RN case managers are always available to make sure employees are getting the care they need, which produces healthier employees and more productive work. We offer more convenient, dedicated occupational health services such as our 19 locations across eastern Wisconsin than any other health system, making treatment convenient for employees.”

Dr. Mary Jo Capocci is the Systems Medical Director for Aurora Occupational Health and Wellness, part of Aurora Employer Solutions.

According to a January 2014 report from HCTrends, a third party benefits consulting firm that focuses on the healthcare needs of employers in Wisconsin, Aurora Health Care was the only hospital system in SE WI to achieve both above-average quality achievements and above-average cost efficiency.

The Aurora Medical Center in Kenosha is a not-for-profit, full service, state-of-the-art community hospital. It serves Racine, Kenosha and Northern Illinois along with its more than 15 clinics and care facilities throughout the region. It is part of Milwaukee-based Aurora Healthcare, Wisconsin’s largest health care system.

The not-for-profit United Hospital System has been serving the Kenosha community for more than 100 years. It consists of two hospitals campuses (with emergency and urgent care services) and four additional physician clinic locations. It is one of the largest employers in Kenosha County.

Wisconsin worker’s comp claims reflect:

- Fewer health care visits per claim
- Fewer health care services per visit
- Better outcomes and lower overall cost
- Comparatively low WC premiums

*Source: NCCI Research Brief (August 2013), published by the National Council on Compensation Insurance, Inc.

The Kenosha Area offers abundant choices to meet the health care needs of the community, including three full service hospitals and numerous medical clinic locations. Additional world-class medical facilities are also available in the nearby Chicago and Milwaukee area communities, including Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital, Medical College of Wisconsin, Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center, Northwestern Memorial Hospital, and Children’s Memorial Hospital of Chicago.

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United Hospital System has continued to expand in the Kenosha Area. In 2013, they built a four-story clinic building adjacent to their St. Catherine’s campus. In 2015, they opened another clinic building on the northside of Kenosha with expanded rehabilitation services.

Better care in Wisconsin helps injured workers return to work and productivity sooner than in any other state.

UHS’ consistent strong operational performance – it’s net operating margin – continues to be near the top of all Wisconsin hospitals.

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In 2014, UHS became completely debt free.
**Y-Link**

**Young Leaders in Kenosha**

Y-Link welcomes new leadership in 2016

Y-Link is pleased to welcome the following committee members to the leadership team in 2016. These individuals were selected by their peers currently serving in a Y-Link leadership position to join the team based on their community involvement, personal initiative and ideas for further improving life for young talent in Kenosha County.

**2015 Scorecard**

**YP Engagement** Total number of individuals attending Y-Link programming.

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<th>2015 goal</th>
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|          | 2014 Goal / Actual: 750 / 1,109 |

**Communication** Total number of individuals attending Y-Link programming.

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|          | 2014 Goal / Actual: 2,500 / 2,564 |

**Volunteer**

Total volunteer hours to non-profit agencies and other organizations in need of community support (includes hours for Y-Link committee and/or board service).

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<th></th>
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<th>Leadership*</th>
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<td>300-360</td>
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|          | 2014 Goal / Actual: 300 / 435 |

**Upcoming events...**

To register or for more info, visit ylinkenosha.com.

**Snow Tubing at Wilmot Mountain**

Date: Jan. 29 | Time: 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

We’re road-trippin’ to Wilmot Mountain for our annual snow tubing event. RSVP by Jan. 22.

**Take the Polar Plunge!**

Date: Feb. 6 @ The Brat Stop | Time: 12:00 - 3:00 p.m.

We’re supporting the Special Olympics of Wisconsin by leaping into some frigid waters.

**WHAT’S UP IN DOWNTOWN KENOSHA**

**2015 in Review**

Every Downtown that participates in the Wisconsin Main Street Program measures performance by tracking various Downtown statistics. Downtown Kenosha did well in its 2nd year of reporting. Some fun facts and project highlights from our 2015 efforts:

- Volunteers offered 2,400 hours of time into DKI and Downtown projects (valuing $5,348 of value (per Bureau of Labor Statistics $23.07/hr.))
- DKI published its first edition of the Downtown Walking Tour, members of the Civic areas of our Downtown
- DKI ran three group clean-up days and several maintenance projects
- DKI Started a new Downtown Ambassador program
- DKI rebuilt our website and online business directory
- DKI distributed over 20,000 pieces of Downtown promotional maps.
- Downtown saw 11 new businesses arrive and eight existing businesses expand
- Downtown created a net new 63.5 jobs
- DKI researched and published our first Downtown Occupancy Study
- 100 new apartments started construction in the 5th Ave. Lofts

**January and February are traditionally difficult months for many small businesses. After the Holiday press, many people simply overlook small business as an option during the winter months. Please make it a point to consider Downtown Kenosha first if you have any shopping needs. Chances are, you’ll find just what you are looking for and with a whole lot more fun in doing so.**

**Specific Business News and Notes:**

- Welcome to Downtown ENVY Salon! Located at 512 57th St, next to Kaisers, this new boutique styling studio is going to be a great addition to our many stylist options in the Downtown.
- The Hodge Podge Cafe recently opened in Downtown Kenosha. The restaurant features a great variety of sandwiches and soups for the breakfast and lunch scene. Located on the southern end of 6th Ave, near Library Park, this is sure to become a favorite place to relax and catch a home cooked meal.
- Please visit the new digs at 6th Ave Salon at 5040 6th Ave, they’ve recently expanded their space and doubled the size of their facility. They also will be offering some spa services as well.  
- Choo Choo Charlie’s also recently opened on the edge of Downtown in the Metra Station. The family themed restaurant serves food on an actual model train!  

**INTERNSHIPS**

DKI is very much dependent on the generosity of our volunteers to move Downtown projects forward. Some of our volunteers opportunities are internships for young adults to help manage some of these projects.

These internships are not paid positions, but they offer an opportunity to learn and develop skills while helping the community. It’s a great way to bolster a resume, contribute to the community, or earn service hours and have fun while doing it.

Some of our intern projects include helping with surveys, developing reports and research, working with volunteers and small businesses, helping develop marketing materials and more! We never take for granted our volunteers and make sure all projects are fit to the skills, abilities, and availability of our interns.

We have an immediate need for those with graphic design skills and abilities to help us produce our monthly Downtown promotional ads and event flyers. This requires proficiency and access to Adobe Creative Suite or an equivalent production capacity. We are not limited to students in this role, and welcome anyone who wishes to contribute to inquire below.

We also have needs throughout the Winter and Spring for various projects. If you know any young adults or students looking for a fun challenge, one that they can help contribute to the improvements of our Downtown, please have them email info@downtownkenosha.org.
Board of Directors

Chair
Frank Unick
Chief Financial Officer, Uline, Inc.

Vice Chair
Susan Ventura
Executive Vice President, United Hospital System

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