

# Perfectly Centered

Triannual Newsletter of the  
Kenosha Area Business Alliance(KABA)

FALL/WINTER 2021

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## Snap-on celebrates 100-year anniversary; announces HQs expansion

On August 26, Snap-on held a delayed celebration of its 100 years in business - a milestone actually hit in 2020. The event kicked off with a presentation by CEO Nick Pinchuk, at which he announced that the tool and equipment manufacturer would be expanding at its Kenosha headquarters.

The expansion plans call for a new 90,000 SF building and what is approaching a \$10 million investment, according to a company statement. Work at the site is underway and is expected to be concluded by the summer of 2022.

The event included a car show, motorsports teams, Snap-on demonstrations and displays, wood carving, kids' carnival, food and beer tent, live music, hot air balloons and sky divers.



Snap-on celebrated its 100th anniversary in August – a year late due to the pandemic in 2020 – with a large celebration at their Kenosha headquarters for their employees and the general public.

Snap-on continues to celebrate more recently—despite supply chain issues plaguing many U.S. companies, Snap-on reported net sales of \$1.04 billion for its third quarter, a 10.2% increase from 2020 and up 15.1% from 2019. Net income also improved from \$179.7 million to \$196.2 million.

On an earnings call in October, Pinchuk highlighted how his company's business model protects it from the issues hitting any number of industries. "We found opportunities on our runway for growth and improvement even amidst these challenging times, and you can see it in the numbers, encouraging," Pinchuk said.



*"We're doing this for two reasons: One, we believe we have a promising future. Two, we can't imagine that future without it depending on Kenosha and having the dedication, capability, energy and the great people of Kenosha at our backs."*

— Nick Pinchuk, Chairman & CEO,  
Snap-on Incorporated

Archives of *Perfectly Centered*  
can be found on our web site:

[www.kaba.org](http://www.kaba.org)



KABA is the lead business organization that drives economic development throughout Kenosha County and supports and provides services to its members and the community, helping to ensure growth, a robust economy, and a positive business climate for the Kenosha Area.

# From the Chair...

## 1.6 PERCENT WON'T BE ENOUGH

Every reader of the KABA newsletter pays attention to numbers. And as a mathematician, I pay attention to many numbers as well. I have one number that should give us all pause.

And that is 1.6 percent – the increase in the population of Kenosha County between 2010 and 2020. The comparative figure for Wisconsin is 3.6 percent. For the United States, the figure is 7.4 percent.

It is important for us to understand why. It is not for lack of economic development projects, or for a lack of new jobs. It is likely a combination of factors: the lack of available and affordable single-family housing; the unresolved challenges of our school districts; the need to attract more young people and families. We need to work on these, and related problems. That will take time.

In the meantime, though, our employers, including both those companies we have recruited here and those firms who have been in our community for years, cannot wait. And so we must give even greater attention to employing more of the people who already live in the county, for mutual benefit of families and firms. Even pre-pandemic, our employers were having trouble filling jobs. What we have been doing has clearly not been sufficient – and so we will need creativity, and leaving aside some practices of the past.

I have seen this creativity first-hand. Some local manufacturers have partnered with Carthage to employ our students. The creativity often involves changing formerly rigid terms of employment: part-time versus full-time; shift lengths; policies on reimbursing employees for personal equipment such as work boots. For Carthage's part, we work through our Aspire career development program to identify students who are willing to work (as most are) and in some cases are

already working for wages less than the manufacturers would pay. The result is a win-win. Our students earn more, have funds set aside for their tuition, and the employers fill jobs, at rates they were already willing to pay. We are actively seeking partnerships with more firms, including through our Business and Professional Coalition.

But this is only one example of what is possible. It is not only college students who are underemployed. A generation ago, the workforce participation rate (the percentage of working-age adults who work) and the youth workforce participation rate (the same for youth) were 10 to 20 percentage points higher. We must think about how we can return to that level of workforce participation, which extends prosperity to more families in the county and supports our economy and its future.

Partnerships among K-12 education, postsecondary education, and businesses will be needed – as well as broad leadership at all levels and across all industries. We must work to improve the outcomes of our school systems, and particularly those of our students of color, who make up the majority of students and therefore of the future local workforce. The future of the county depends on it.



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John A. Wallaw".

President, Carthage College; and  
Chair of the KABA Board of Directors

## THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING COMPANIES FOR THEIR INVESTMENT:

**BALCAN PLASTICS**  
[balcan.com/en](http://balcan.com/en)

**CLEARCOM INC.**  
[clearcominc.com](http://clearcominc.com)

**EXPRESS EMPLOYMENT PROFESSIONALS**  
[expresspros.com](http://expresspros.com)

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[graef-usa.com](http://graef-usa.com)

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**NORTHPOINT DEVELOPMENT**  
[beyondthecontract.com](http://beyondthecontract.com)

**PLEASANT PRAIRIE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU**  
[visitpleasantprairie.com](http://visitpleasantprairie.com)

**PURATOS**  
[puratos.us/en](http://puratos.us/en)

# LAKEFRONT SCULPTURE WALK

Sponsors are needed to support the next installment of outdoor sculptures in Kenosha.

Sculpture Walk–Harbor Park is organized biennially by the Arts Fund of Kenosha, a component fund of the Kenosha Community Foundation. The current exhibit, which was extended a year due to the pandemic, will be removed in September 2022. New temporary sculptures will be installed and remain in place until September 2024.

Most of the sculptures are located along the promenade on the south side of Harbor Park. Additional locations are near the Pierhead Lighthouse at the Kenosha Water Utility and Civic Center Park, 5600 Sheridan Road.



*"This is a wonderful opportunity to support public art and to be a part of a very popular point of interest in our community."*

— Sculpture Walk Project Manager Natalie Strohm

## K A B A I N V E S T O R N E W S

### SIX KENOSHA COUNTY COMPANIES NOMINATED FOR THE 'COOLEST THING MADE IN WISCONSIN'

Each year, Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce (WMC) and Johnson Financial Group host an online poll to determine the 'Coolest Thing Made in Wisconsin'. The annual competition aims to highlight the state's vibrant manufacturing industry.

This year, six Kenosha County manufacturers were in the running: Five Star Fabricating (Twin Lakes), Good Foods Group (Pleasant Prairie), Kenall (Kenosha), Mikrotech (Kenosha), MTI (Pleasant Prairie), Ocean Spray (Kenosha), Puratos (Kenosha). The champion was Manitowoc-based Broadwind, providing heavy fabrication, gearing and assembly. Nominations for 2022 will open in August. Learn more at [madeinwis.com](https://www.madeinwis.com).



### ASYST TECHNOLOGY CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

In 1996, German company EJOT Holding and ATF Inc. founded ASYST Technologies in Lincolnwood, IL as a joint venture. The automotive lighting aiming mechanisms and devices manufacturer began production in June of that year.

In June 1997, they broke ground on their Kenosha facility. They continued to grow, breaking ground on a second building in Kenosha in 2004, and expanded again in 2015.



### VRAKAS CPAS + ADVISORS EXPANDS IN KENOSHA

The public accounting and business advisory firm, Vrakas S.C., has relocated its Kenosha office, effective November 15, 2021.

Due to its continued growth, Vrakas has expanded, taking over the Valeri Insurance Agency space located at 6309 60th Street, Suite 200.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Vonco Products expanding its facility in the Salem Business Park

Vonco Products LLC broke ground in October on a 36,500 SF expansion of their facility at 10826 250th Avenue in the Salem Business Park.

Vonco's need for more space is the result of two intersecting events that have led to significant growth for the company: rising healthcare and medical device demand as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; and a supply chain on the verge of collapse as medical device parts and packaging sits idle on cargo ships.

"Vonco has an incredible team that are running a great business and because of that are growing to meet their customers' needs. We are happy to have Vonco here in Kenosha County and excited to see them grow here," said Kenosha County Executive Jim Kreuser.

The Kenosha Area Business Alliance, Inc. (KABA) will provide the financing for the expansion of the original building. Vonco will continue to rent the building with an option to purchase. KABA will also provide an \$800,000 low-interest loan for equipment as part of Vonco's expansion efforts. The loan will be funded out of the new EDA CARES revolving loan fund.

"Vonco is a success story and the kind of company we are glad we can support," said KABA Director of Finance and Administration Brock Portilia. "Since coming to Kenosha County, and through the pandemic, they have continued to grow and expand their product offerings, workforce, equipment, customers, and now their physical space."



Pictured above (L-R): Matt Prince (Riley Construction), Mark Nordigian (Kenosha County Board), Diann Tesar (Village of Salem Lakes Board), Keith Smith (Vonco Products), John O'Day (Kenosha County Board), Todd Battle (KABA), Rep. Samantha Kerkman.

Vonco is hiring 10 immediately and another 20 before construction is complete. Interested applicants can visit <https://www.vonco.com/> to apply.



*"Our customers rely on us, more so now than ever, to help them both meet increased consumer demand AND shift their supply chain strategy back to the United States. This expansion enables us to deliver on both by investing in new capital equipment and creating high-quality jobs for skilled workers. I'm excited to see where the future leads."*

— Keith Smith, President, Vonco Products (pictured left)

## Allied Plastics expands for the seventh time with new facility

Allied Plastics is celebrating 25 years in business by expanding...yet again. The plastics thermo-former, based in far western Kenosha County, is officially celebrating turning 25 this year, after being unable to in 2020. They are highlighting their incredible growth story - having expanded seven times in their short history.

Located in Wilmot, WI, the new DC is just five miles from Allied Plastics' main manufacturing facility and headquarters in Twin Lakes. The addition adds 35,000 SF of warehouse space and 6,500+ SF of brand new office space. The company is leasing space from Geneva Supply who moved into the building earlier this year. The large facility was actually the site of the first Gander Mountain store and more recently occupied by American Girl Doll who moved out in 2018. It is replacing the company's existing warehouse in Genoa City, WI, and is also sparing Allied from having to purchase or build a second warehouse.



Allied Plastics' Twin Lakes HQs.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Trifinity Distribution Center expanding into Pleasant Prairie

Trifinity Specialized Distribution is expanding into a 147,877 SF warehouse in Pleasant Prairie's LakeView Corporate Park. The location will be used to warehouse and distribute over-the-counter vitamins, health, and beauty products.

In 2020, Trifinity relocated from Waukegan, IL to a 250,000 SF facility in the Business Park of Kenosha. The company's second facility in Pleasant Prairie is expected to be operational by December 2021 and will employ approximately 48 full-time employees.

Trifinity provides third-party logistics solutions and services to significant retailers, including Wal-Mart, Sam's Club, Target, Costco, and most drug chains.



## KABA PORTFOLIO UPDATE

In October 2021, KABA's Finance Committee approved a \$1,200,000 low interest loan to Kenosha Uptown Lofts, LLC. The funds will be used to acquire property along 22nd Avenue for a redevelopment project. This loan will be funded from the KABA Revolving Loan Fund.

In October 2021, KABA's Finance Committee approved a \$250,000 low interest loan to Five Star Fabricating. The funds will be used to purchase new equipment to be located at Five Star's manufacturing facility in Twin Lakes, WI. This loan will be funded from the new EDA CARES Revolving Loan Fund.



## ClearSky Health selects Kenosha as site for new medical rehabilitation hospital

ClearSky Health, a rehabilitative healthcare provider, has announced it has selected the City of Kenosha for the location of a new 30-bed medical rehabilitation hospital.

A specific location has not yet been announced by the organization, which currently owns and operates five hospitals in Texas, Louisiana and New Mexico, with plans to open new facilities in Arizona, Kansas and additional Texas locations.

The hospital plans to provide specialized, rehabilitative care to about 650 patients annually who are living with disabling injuries or illnesses such as strokes, brain injuries, hip fractures, spinal injuries, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis or other medically-complex conditions such as COVID-19.



## Rust-Oleum, EMCO making alterations at their facilities

Paint and solvents manufacturer Rust-Oleum and EMCO Chemical Distributors are reconfiguring areas of their Pleasant Prairie plants. Both companies are located in LakeView Corporate Park.

EMCO plans to make changes to a western-facing section of its facility creating an unloading area for trucks, a tank farm storage area, and a blending room to manufacture products. The modifications will improve the shipping and handling capacity of the industrial distribution division, which receives chemicals in bulk, unloads chemicals into storage tanks, and packages chemicals into smaller containers.

Construction is expected to be complete by spring 2020 and will not change the square footage of the building or number of employees.

Rust-Oleum Corporation is replacing and relocating its indoor still system with a new outdoor system on the west side of its facility. The still system is used in Rust-Oleum's paint manufacturing process to recover solvent for reuse and reduce waste volume.

# LET'S TALK TALENT

## Carthage College president John Swallow named chair of the Higher Education Regional Alliance (HERA)

The Higher Education Regional Alliance – a collaborative representing 18 southeastern Wisconsin higher education institutions and several partner organizations – has named Carthage College president John Swallow as its next chair.

Swallow, who has led Carthage since 2017, succeeds Mark Mone, chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, as HERA chair. Swallow is also the current chair of the KABA Board of Directors.

*“Colleges, universities, employers, and community organizations across southeastern Wisconsin all want the same thing: an equitable education system that produces an agile workforce equipped for the 21st century. These efforts are too important to take on alone, so I’m thrilled to channel our collective will and expertise through the Higher Education Regional Alliance.”*

— John Swallow, President, Carthage College

## Inspire 2021 was a day full of connection, insights & inspiration

Inspire was back in 2021! Nearly 550 attendees attended the half-day event held October 15th at Journey Church.

Four speakers engaged the audience with different takes on leadership - NYT best-selling author Dan Heath, Nexus Pharmaceuticals' Ayesha Ahmed, Radical Candor Coach Bina Martin, and community activist Jahmal Cole. Willie Jude from UW-Parkside and Building Our Future's Brandon Morris were this year's co-emcees. Attendees also heard about inspiring local initiatives like Kenosha Awesome Cookies and the Kenosha Coalition Organizing Resolution (KCOR). Learn more about the event at [InspireKenosha.com](https://InspireKenosha.com).

Thank you to all who joined us and to our generous sponsors and partners!

See photos at the KABA facebook page: @KABACoconnectHere and read more about the 2021 event at [kaba.org/news/list](https://kaba.org/news/list).



## THE KABA MENTOR PROGRAM



### KABA is thrilled to announce that its Mentor Program is back in session and looking for mentors!

The KABA Mentor Program matches at-risk Kindergarten through 5th grade students with volunteer mentors from the Kenosha business community to establish a caring relationship and improve motivation to learn, self-esteem, and academic performance. Mentors meet once a week with their student at their school.

Learn more at <https://kaba.org/kaba-mentor-program>. Interested in being a mentor? Email [mentorprogram@kaba.org](mailto:mentorprogram@kaba.org).



# FAST FORWARD GRANT PROGRAM

The Department of Workforce Development's Office of Skills Development (OSD) is again accepting applications for its Fast Forward Grant Program. The grant offerings have been redesigned into a single grant opportunity: Industry Sectors Worker Training Grants. This grant program is designed to help fund the development of innovative and collaborative customized worker training programs.

Key features of this grant program:

- > Grants are available to all industry sectors and companies of any size;
- > Grant award amounts may range from \$5,000 to \$400,000;
- > Cash or in-kind match equal to 50% of the grant award amount is required;
- > Grantee must complete training of at least 85% of the contracted number of trainees; and
- > At least 65% of trainees must be placed in positions with the placement partner(s) identified in the grant application that require the skills taught in the provided training.

For more information and to apply, please visit [bit.ly/WIFF\\_1121](https://bit.ly/WIFF_1121).

## A gift from the Callahan family will fund a scholarship program, new Student Success & Learning Commons

The University of Wisconsin-Parkside recently received a \$3 million gift from the Callahan family of Kenosha to fund a new scholarship program for UW-Parkside students: the Callahan Scholars. The new program will benefit students with financial need with an emphasis on supporting Kenosha County students and students of color.

The gift announcement coincided with the grand opening of the Callahan Family Student Success & Learning Commons. This renovated campus space is part of the university's \$35.4 million state-funded Wyllie renewal project. The project also updates infrastructure in Wyllie Hall, which opened in 1972, and provides significant remodeling of the UW-Parkside Library with a planned completion date of fall 2022.



*"The investment at UW-Parkside and the Callahan Family's leadership as community supporters of the university take us to the next level in growth and achievement for all students, which will have a lasting impact for graduates, the university, and the region."*

*— UW-Parkside Chancellor Debbie Ford*

## Regents approve new partnership with Gateway Technical College, UW-Parkside, allowing students to earn two-year liberal arts degrees



The University of Wisconsin Board of Regents has paved the way for Gateway Technical College to begin offering two, two-year liberal arts degrees. The UW Board of Regents voted in October to allow Gateway to begin offering Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees for the first time. The degrees were made possible through a partnership between Gateway and UW-Parkside. Gateway, UW-Parkside, the Wisconsin Technical College System and Gateway's accrediting agency, the Higher Learning Commission, have already signed off on the new degrees, allowing the college to begin offering them in fall 2022.

# The Path to finding your path

*"All Artists are entrepreneurs. All entrepreneurs are artists."*  
— Seth Godin

Since we launched the Kenosha Creative Space a few years ago, it has been one of our goals to connect creatives and artists with community resources to become more successful.

During this time, we have learned that launching a project, organization, or converting your creative expression into a business, is not easy. It takes time to learn everything that needs to happen in order to succeed. It takes time to find your path.

It really is not easy: "According to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as reported by Fundera, approximately 20 percent of small businesses fail within the first year. By the end of the second year, 30 percent of businesses will have failed. By the end of the fifth year, about half will have failed. And by the end of the decade, only 30 percent of businesses will remain – a 70 percent failure rate." – Entrepreneur Magazine.

It has to be a way to increase those odds.



I met Jeff Shinabarger at KABA's Inspire conference, he came to Kenosha to talk about his book *Less or More* after his presentation, he was waiting for his taxi to take him back to the airport. I went to thank him for a great presentation, and at that serendipitous encounter I learned about the Plywood Process and The Plywood Path.

After learning more about his organization and these programs, we believe that it would be important for the Creative Space to implement a similar program to help local creatives increase their chances of success.

## The Plywood Path

Path is an interactive six-week online course designed to help problem solvers, creatives and social entrepreneurs decide which direction to take with their idea. This course gives you insight on the "who, why and how" upon which you will build the foundation of your organization.

Local resources to help you start and run a business or organization exist in Kenosha, but what, in my view, is missing is a program that prepares you to polish your idea, prepare you for what to expect, not only in a professional way, but also in a personal way.

Past participants in this program have a higher rate of success, they find their "Path" faster and are better prepared to deal with the uncertainties of running a business.

Seventeen participants will be participating in the first session of The Path and the first week of programming took place in early November. If you're interested in being involved or sponsoring future programming, please reach out to the Kenosha Creative Space at [info@kenoshacreativespace.com](mailto:info@kenoshacreativespace.com).

Written by Francisco Loyola, Executive Director, Kenosha Creative Space.

## SEEN ON SOCIAL...

### @LMIPACKAGING

It's a beautiful day for a food truck! Thanks 911 Tacos for serving all 3 shifts today!

#kenosha  
#weloveouremployees





# ON LEADERSHIP

## One Sentence Matters | by Aleta Norris

*I would love to hear more.*

That is all she needed to say, and it would have made the difference.

I remember the day vividly over 33 years ago. I was telling my new leader about some things I loved very much about my previous employer, the John Harland Check Printing Company.

Without pausing for a moment, she replied, *This isn't Harland.*

I was crushed and felt differently about both her and me for the remaining years we worked together, and beyond.

Think how differently I would have felt if she had said, *Tell me more.*

I've been working with a company recently who merged two companies together. In both locations, employees are struggling with the loss of their autonomy and prior uniqueness of their prior culture. Leaders, in contract, are enthusiastically focused on the opportunities of the future.

When an employee makes a comment representing their struggle, it may sound something like:

*In the past we used to \_\_\_\_\_.*

*This is not the way we've done it.*

*I've been here for 30 years, and I don't know where I fit anymore.*

*There is so much change going on; it's difficult.*

If you're the leader, what will your first sentence be after hearing a comment similar to any of the above?

If you don't understand your employees' need to be heard, to have an opinion and to be acknowledged for their loss, you might say something like,

*Well, we're not focused on the past anymore.*

*We can't do things the way you did in the past.*

*Just keep doing what you're doing.*

*It is, but we don't have a choice.*

If you do understand your employees' need to be heard, to have an opinion and to be acknowledged for their loss, you might say something like:

*I'd like to learn more.*

*How do you feel about this new way?*

*I realize we have to figure things out, and for now I want you to know you're invaluable to us and to our future.*

*Change can be difficult; would you like to share more about your struggle?*

Whatever your first sentence, your employee will likely remember it well beyond their moment of struggle.

Choose wisely and with care.

**Aleta Norris is a leadership expert and Principal at Living as a Leader LLC.**



## Growing Leaders | by Donna Jamieson

Through my years in leadership, I've had wonderful opportunities to mentor others whether they were seeking growth as newer leaders or defining their path toward their career aspirations. As I help these growing leaders, I often find myself sharing four consistent perspectives.

Opportunities do not always come at the most convenient times. High performing individuals sometimes get tapped for a career change when they least expect it, or the type of opportunity may not be necessarily in their plan. Statements like "I want to accomplish more in my current role" or "I have not really thought of this as a possible option" are not uncommon. I usually ask these leaders to embrace the moment, at least be open to a conversation and explore what the opportunity might mean for their professional growth.



Highly talented leaders are often tapped for many stretch opportunities. Top performers can easily become the "go to" for special assignments. Stretch assignments are great for unleashing the potential and are never small commitments. Define a direction and strategically choose commitments to showcase strengths, establish a new relationship or invest time in a developmental area.

Allow for vertical stretch. For leaders that are identified as promotion-ready in 1-2 years, have them spend about 20-30 percent of their time in functions for the next level role. This helps to create organizational visibility as well as expand their network to the next tier of leaders.

Expand mentor options. Often, mentors come from within the same function or organization, yet we know there are partner functions or industries that influence our businesses. Consider seeking out mentors outside of the same function or in partner industries to broaden business acumen and relationships.

**Donna Jamieson is President of Aurora Medical Center - Kenosha, Advocate Aurora Health.**

# In other news...

## KENOSHA COUNTY CELEBRATES RECONSTRUCTION OF A SECTION OF HWY H, HELPING KROGER PROJECT

In October, Kenosha County celebrated the reconstruction of a section of Kenosha County Highway H in the Village of Pleasant Prairie— a project that helped facilitate development of the new Kroger Fulfillment Center which will bring hundreds of jobs to our area.

The nearly-mile-long reconstruction of Highway H (88th Avenue) between 93rd Place and Bain Station Road included the addition of turn lanes to accommodate the new Kroger Delivery fulfillment center development at 9091 88th Ave.

This roadwork was conducted with the support of a \$951,135 Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) grant from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.



## KENOSHA COUNTY'S BOND RATING ACHIEVES HIGHEST LEVEL

Kenosha County received a bond rating upgrade in August to Triple A (AAA), the highest possible, from Standard & Poor's. In its report, S&P said it upgraded the County from AA+ to AAA because it "reflects a strengthening in our view of the county's institutionalized policies and practices, stable budgetary resilience throughout the pandemic, and continued maintenance of very strong available general fund reserves."

Kenosha County is now among only seven of the state's 72 counties that has attained a Triple A rating. The other counties are Brown, Dane, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Washington and Waukesha. The State of Wisconsin is rated AA, while the state of Illinois is BBB- to BBB.

*"I'm very proud of the past County Board leaders who put us on this path to achieve Triple A. It shows the importance of doing the right thing, which is not always the most politically expedient thing, but that it will save taxpayers' dollars so that we can make the appropriate investments in the long-term economic health of Kenosha County."*

*— Jeffrey Gentz, County Finance & Administration Committee Chairman*

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## CONSTRUCTION ON A SOLAR FARM IN THE TOWN OF PARIS IS UNDERWAY

Paris Solar Energy Center LLC, a subsidiary of Chicago-based power generation company Invenery, began construction in October on one of the largest solar farms in the state of Wisconsin. The utility-grade project in the Town of Paris is expected to begin generating power by early spring or summer of 2023.

The overall project area covers 5,350 acres of farmland in Paris about 1.5 miles west of I-94, bordering Highway KR on the north, Highway 45 on the west and partly adjacent to Highway 142 on the south. Approximately 1,500 acres are slated to be developed to host the proposed solar facilities, including a large-scale battery storage facility. The solar arrays will generate enough electricity to power 60,000 homes annually.



An Invenery solar farm in Grand Ridge, IL.

Read more about these stories and others at [kaba.org/news/list](https://kaba.org/news/list).

# In other news...

## THE VILLAGE OF BRIGHTON STRIVES TO REMAIN RURAL

A broad cross section of community members in Brighton have been coming together for the past year to discuss the town's future. KABA's Heather Wessling Grosz is working with the residents of the far northwestern Kenosha County community to explore what controls, measures, and mechanisms exist to help them meet the goals of maintaining a rural community. Subject matter experts on land use and zoning, property values and taxes, permanent conservancy and the history of the town and its farming community spoke each month..

The committee will host a community meeting in early 2022 to share what they've learned. The process is an important precursor to a more formal review of the town's Smart Growth Plan, including land-use considerations.

*"The board is very committed to keeping Brighton the rural community that it is today."*

— Susan Crane, Chair, Town of Brighton



## I-94 NORTH-SOUTH PROJECT WINS NATIONAL AWARD

America's Transportation Awards named the I-94 North-South Freeway Project in Milwaukee, Racine and Kenosha counties one of the nation's outstanding infrastructure projects for 2021.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) completed the I-94 North-South Project on schedule and under budget in 2020. A key link for interstate travel, the project reconstructed and expanded 19 miles of concrete pavement to provide eight lanes of travel with full concrete shoulders. Four interchanges and 18 bridges were replaced during the compressed time frame.

An average annual daily traffic volume of over 98,000, with 17% trucks, makes the I-94 North-South one of the most heavily trafficked freight corridors in the nation.

The I-94 North-South project will compete with other regional nominees for national awards. The top two prizes carry a \$10,000 cash prize to support a transportation-related scholarship.

*"A global pandemic, a very aggressive schedule and all the complexities of a major interstate project through highly developed counties required innovation, hard work and total commitment. Getting this done right means improved safety and easier travel. The improvements also support the growing number of businesses located along the corridor."*

— Craig Thompson, WisDOT Secretary-designee

# D O W N T O W N   # U P T O W N  
# O N E T O W N   # K E N O S H A S T R O N G

## KABA continues to disburse Disaster Recovery Microloans (DRM) to local businesses

For the past year, KABA has administered the Disaster Recovery Microloan (DRM) Program on behalf of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC). The DRM program is a loan program for local businesses who suffered measurable physical damage to their buildings/businesses due to the civil unrest in the City of Kenosha in August 2020.

To date, KABA has funded \$3.85MM in interest free loans to 62 different businesses in the City of Kenosha to make necessary repairs and rebuild inventory.

**More information about the DRM program is available at [kaba.org/Kenosha\\_Cty\\_DRM\\_2020](https://kaba.org/Kenosha_Cty_DRM_2020).**





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### **Josh Ferguson**

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### **Dr. Deborah Ford**

Chancellor, University  
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### **Jamie Hogan**

President, Specialized  
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### **Donna Jamieson**

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Medical Center -  
Kenosha

### **Anthony Jefferson, Sr.**

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### **A.J. Kegg**

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### **Jerry King**

CFO, Kenosha Beef  
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### **Tom King**

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InSinkErator

### **Jim Kinney**

Chairman, State Bank  
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### **Christie Lawson**

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Business Line, MTI - A  
Steel Partners Co.

### **Chad Navis**

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Investments, Zilber  
Property Group

### **Aldo Pagliari**

Senior Vice President  
- Finance & CFO,  
Snap-on Incorporated

### **Bethany Ormseth**

Interim  
Superintendent of  
Schools, Kenosha  
Unified School  
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### **Kurt Penn**

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Good Foods Group

### **Mike Pitts, Jr.**

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& Associates

### **Matt Prince**

President, Riley  
Construction Company

### **Wes Saber**

Executive VP & CFO,  
Haribo of America, Inc

### **Corey Schultz**

Vice President of  
Sales & Marketing,  
Five Star Fabricating

### **Charles Skendziel**

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### **Maureen Sorensen**

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### **Mike Thompson**

President & CEO  
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## STAFF

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### **Lisa Feltson**

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Director of Talent  
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### **Jeanne Geiger**

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### **Becky Noble**

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### **Heather Wessling Grosz**

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