



Official Newsletter of the Bluegrass Economic Advancement Movement | Issue I, November 12, 2012

Latest News

BEAM Goes to Washington: Growing the Region's Export Agenda

A group of six individuals representing BEAM participated in a two-day metropolitan export exchange (Oct. 16-17), a learning session with the Brookings Institution. Also selected to participate in the meeting through a competitive process were representatives from seven other cities, including Charleston, SC; Chicago, IL; Columbus, OH; Des Moines, IA; San Antonio, CA; San Diego, CA; and Tampa Bay, FL.

All cities have been selected to participate in developing metropolitan export plans for their region through the Brookings Metropolitan Export Exchange. The Brookings Institution decided to imbed export planning in metropolitan areas because metros are in the unique position to identify and increase the number of firms ready to export and metros are positioned to make exports and global engagement a central, consistent part of regional economic strategies. BEAM was selected for this process, because of the region's readiness for export planning. Earlier this year, Mayor Fischer and Mayor Gray launched "Build it Locally, Sell it Globally," where they committed to increasing the number of companies who begin to export or expand their exports to new countries by 50-percent in five years within the BEAM region.

City representatives heard from four metropolitan export exchange pilot cities: Los Angeles, CA; Portland, OR; Minneapolis, MN; and Syracuse, NY. The pilot cities shared their experiences with developing metropolitan export plans which entailed conducting the research and market scan of their regional export markets, and developing strategic objectives and leverage points to incentivize local export growth and other market leverage points. BEAM also received information on how to use federal export data and learned about the different kinds of data available from the federal government.

Representing the BEAM region at the metropolitan export exchange were Bob Quick, President and CEO of Commerce Lexington Inc., Kevin Atkins, Chief De-



velopment Officer, Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government; Peggy Pauley, Director of the U.S. Export Assistance Center, Patti Birk, Performance Management with Louisville Metro Government, Michael Iacovazzi Pau, Global Engagement Manager for Greater Louisville Inc, and Haley Stevens with Louisville Metro Government.

Lessons Shared

Brookings shared that the pilot cities reflect that metro areas are the critical intersection for export promotion, planning and growth. As metros are our nation's centers of innovation, producers of tradable goods and services, attractions of talent, and hubs of freight and passenger movement; they are poised to lead 21st century export agendas. The 100 largest metro areas produce the majority of exports for the nation, including generating more than three-quarters of all service exports. Metros are collections of unique assets that are positioned for export success. Metros are the places where goods are assembled, stored, and shipped and they are launch pads for export growth.

Next Steps

BEAM is uniquely positioned through its expansive metropolitan statistical area which encompasses Kentucky's two largest cities and 22 counties overall. The Export Exchange working group will customize export data for each county that will contribute to the development of the plan. The group will also work to uncover the companies who could be exporting to more markets or the companies who could start to export.

Over the next months, members of the core group participating in the Metropolitan Export Exchange will engage local input as they go through the process of developing an export agenda for the BEAM region.

About BEAM

The Bluegrass Economic Advancement Movement (BEAM) is a partnership between Louisville, Lexington and the prestigious public-policy think tank, The Brookings Institution of Washington, D.C. Together they will develop and implement a business plan for the entire multi-county region, focused intently on advanced manufacturing – the most high-tech form of manufacturing, which is already an authentic strength of the Louisville/Lexington region. The goal is to create new, well-paying jobs, which will benefit all of Kentucky.

Group Meeting Updates

Board Meeting Featured Ford Philanthropic Initiative

The BEAM Board Meeting in September began with a press conference that included **Lexington Mayor Jim Gray**, **Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer**, and **Jay Morgan** (pictured at right), Ford Motor Company's regional director of corporate and government affairs. Morgan made the announcement that Ford would expand its Operation Goodwill philanthropic initiative to the Central Kentucky area.

During the board meeting, **Ms. Haley Stevens** was introduced to the group and will now be in charge of the day-to-day activities for the Bluegrass Economic Advancement Movement going forward. Stevens' background is in economic development, and she recently served as a special economic advisor at the U.S. Department of Commerce in Washington, D.C.



YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

The meeting agenda began with a presentation by the BEAM Young Professionals Committee led by **Nick Such** and **Grant Mills**. The goal of the committee is to gather the "best and brightest" from the Lexington and Louisville areas and "be disruptive and challenge the status quo."

The committee outlined much of the state's education, innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem for a reference point of what Kentucky does well. The Governor's Scholars Program is part of that asset list and could be leveraged more, they said. Currently, the committee is focused on three initiatives related to the BEAM region, including software, intellectual property, and continuous education.

INNOVATION

The Innovation Committee, represented by **Bob Weissboard** from the Brookings Institution, reported that the research gathered by the group indicated four key areas of opportunity for small and medium-sized manufacturers to increase their innovation activity and productivity, including: product development; process improvements; business development; and breakthrough technologies.

The Innovation Committee found that small and medium-sized manufacturers don't have efficient or reliable resources to help them with capacity, space, or talent to support the innovation process. This point was echoed by board member **Jim Lancaster**, founder of Lantech, based on his own experiences with innovation. He mentioned that times of high innovation often come when the economy is slower and businesses must innovate to keep their customers. Continual innovation and investment in new technologies is paramount to ensuring survival and future prosperity, and the committee plans to outline initiatives that can help small and medium-sized manufacturers with innovation.

HUMAN CAPITAL

Scott Shapiro, Senior Advisor in Mayor Gray's office, presented for the Human Capital Committee, which decided to focus on apprenticeships and branding. Shapiro presented a concept that fused together these two topics – a "branded apprenticeship." He clarified that the term "apprenticeship" refers to any type of earn-and-learn program to meet a broad range of employer needs. There are many such programs already in existence in Kentucky, and having a brand would help create a gravitational pull around manufacturing careers as well as support companies to develop their own solutions.

The group felt that this was an opportunity to differentiate our state from other manufacturing centers around the country, because it doesn't appear that any other state is committed to a framework of earn-and-learn programs to train the next generation of workers. Board Member **Earl Jones** (pictured below facing camera) from General Electric stressed that the production level skills gap is a challenge for all firms regardless of size, and that this type of program would be very valuable.



Next Board Meeting:

Monday,
December 10
1:00 p.m.
Kentucky
History Center
100 West
Broadway,
Frankfort KY