

# FULL STRIDE INITIATIVE

Commerce  
Lexington  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Investor Update  
April 1 – June 30, 2019

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 Company Announcements
- 2 Events, Conferences, and Networking
- 6 Business and Education Network
- 8 Community and Minority Business Development



## Commerce Lexington Inc. Economic Development Launches New Video

We are proud to introduce our new economic development video. Its main purpose is to showcase Lexington to prospective clients considering a new location, but it can be used by all Lexington businesses to highlight our great city. We hope that your company will use the video as a tool for recruiting employees and promoting Lexington. It provides a strong message about our quality of life and economic vitality through the perspective of several of the amazing businesses who call Lexington home.

*View the new video [here](#).*

Also, don't forget to like us on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn – [LocateinLexington](#) – to follow our release of the video and other economic development news.

## By the Numbers

In 2019, Commerce Lexington Inc.'s Economic Development Division responded to calls from the following:

**47** NEW PROSPECTS INTERESTED IN FINDING A NEW LOCATION OR EXPANDING OPERATIONS

**19** COMPANIES WITH POTENTIAL EXPANSIONS IN LEXINGTON

**90** EXISTING BUSINESS VISITS

**14** CLIENT VISITS

## Wise Bird Cider Co. opens in the Distillery District

In June, Commerce Lexington Inc. and VisitLEX participated in a soft opening of Wise Bird Cider Co., which is located in the Pepper Distillery District. They are the newest member of the Brew Grass Trail and the newest business in the historic Rickhouse. Currently, they are serving four products and have four more in production. Our team enjoyed working with them on their site selection process.



Wise Bird Cider Co. cuts the ribbon on their first location in Lexington.

# COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENTS

## LBX Company unveils new Customer Experience Center

In mid-June, Mayor Linda Gorton and Commerce Lexington Inc.'s Bob Quick joined LBX Co. LLC, which produces Link-Belt excavators, material handlers, and forestry equipment, in opening its \$10 million-plus customer experience and training center in Lexington.

LBX revealed its new facility on 25 acres in the Citation Business Park on Remington Way. The operation will accommodate customer experience programs, including dealer training, product demonstrations, and community events. The location is the company's second in Lexington, joining its headquarters and distribution center on Buck Lane.

"Lexington is fortunate to have LBX Co., a global leader in excavators, headquartered here," Quick said. "The Customer Experience Center will enhance their operations and allow them to better serve their customers from Central Kentucky. Congratulations on this exciting project."



Commerce Lexington Inc. joined community leaders and LBX Co. executives in cutting the ribbon to their new Customer Experience Center.

# EVENTS, CONFERENCES, AND NETWORKING



left to right: Tim Roland, Badger Technologies; Wells Bullard, Bullard; David Hasler; Jon Bostock, Truman's; Drura Parrish, Xometry

## Gatton's Predicting the Turn Summit

Five economic development clients were featured at the Predicting the Turn Summit, an event hosted by the Von Allmen Center for Entrepreneurship (VACE) and the Don and Cathy Jacobs Executive Education Center. The event's keynote was Dave Knox, a leading consultant and author in the areas of innovation, marketing, and digital transformation. The event also had a panel featuring: Wells Bullard, CEO of Bullard; Jon Bostock, former President of Big Ass Fans and Founder of Truman's; David Hasler, former CFO of Fazoli's Restaurant; Tim Rowland, founder and CEO of Badger Technologies; and Drura Parrish, EVP of Platform at Xometry.

## Council District Day: Councilmember James Brown

In April, our economic development team kicked off Council District Days, which entails two to three visits with existing businesses in the councilmember's district. On these days, councilmembers learn about the companies, hear about the opportunities and challenges they face, and tour their facilities. These visits are an excellent way to engage the councilmember in their business community as well as to give them a better understanding of our economic development efforts. In April, Councilmember James Brown participated by visiting Hydra, an aromatherapy products manufacturer, and LexPlastics, a custom plastic injection molding company. We look forward to hosting more councilmembers over the coming months.



Councilmember Brown joins Hydra on a tour of their facility on Midland Avenue.

# EVENTS, CONFERENCES, AND NETWORKING



## CLX attends IAMC Spring Forum

In early May, our economic development team attended the IAMC Spring Professional Forum in Santa Barbara, California. The forum attracts major corporations, as well as the country’s top site selection consultants, to an interactive conference. Networking was a large component of the forum and Commerce Lexington Inc. had the opportunity to market the Bluegrass region to the key decision makers at corporations, as well as consultants.

Keynote speaker Steve Forbes, Editor in Chief of Forbes Magazine, addresses the IAMC conference.

## ED team hosts Site Selection Simulation

Our economic development team hosted CLX board members, councilmembers, and other partners from the Bluegrass region for a Site Selection Simulation in May. During this activity, attendees were assigned to a company or community role to experience site selection firsthand. The interactive simulation engaged the attendees in the process a company and community go through when choosing a location. It is a great opportunity to show how site selection works and what our team does every day.



Community leaders take part in an economic development simulation.



## Bluegrass Alliance travels to Chicago

The Bluegrass Alliance hosted a successful site selection consultant luncheon in Chicago in June. Our regional group, consisting of Lexington, the surrounding counties plus Frankfort and Mt. Sterling, met with 16 site selection consultants and shared new developments in the region. This is an annual trip for all partners to attend. Establishing and cultivating relationships with consultants is vital to our role as economic developers.

Economic developers network with site selection consultants.

# EVENTS, CONFERENCES, AND NETWORKING



## Manufacturers' Networking Group meets at Link-Belt Cranes

In June, the Manufacturers' Networking Group met at Link-Belt Cranes' headquarters and manufacturing operation. They heard from the Kentucky Chamber on the Talent Pipeline Management program they are implementing, which is a demand-driven, employer-led approach to close the skills gap. Attendees also had an opportunity to tour Link-Belt Cranes' manufacturing operation. There were 34 manufacturers in attendance.

Manufacturers tour Link-Belt Cranes' headquarters and manufacturing facility.

## SelectUSA

Our economic development team attended the SelectUSA Investment Summit in Washington, DC in late June. We partner with KentuckyUnited and the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development at this event. This summit brings in over 1,300 investors from all over the world to connect them with economic development organizations facilitating investment in the United States. This summit gives Commerce Lexington Inc. the opportunity to network directly with investors interested in finding a location for their business operations.

Governor Bevin addresses SelectUSA attendees.



## Economic development team attends C2ER conference

The economic development team traveled to St. Louis in June for the annual conference of the Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER). C2ER is a membership organization that promotes excellence in community and economic research by working to improve data availability, enhance data quality, and foster learning about regional economic analytic methods. The conference serves as professional development as well as a great opportunity to share best practices.

Researchers from economic development organizations learn best practices at C2ER conference.

# EVENTS, CONFERENCES, AND NETWORKING



## SPARK AgTech in Kentucky

In June, Mayor Gorton and Commerce Lexington Inc.'s Bob Quick co-moderated a panel of companies at the SPARK AgTech in Kentucky luncheon. Panelists included Angelika Fath-Goodin of Lepidext, Jessica Scott of AgTech Scientific, Eric Hauck of MEP Equine Solutions, and Taylor Bright of TEC Biosciences. Our team is excited to further grow our AgTech industry in Central Kentucky with Mayor Gorton and her team.

Industry panel discussion at Spark AgTech luncheon.

## Lexington Entrepreneurship Day

Commerce Lexington Inc. participated in the second annual Lexington Entrepreneurship Day, in partnership with Awesome Inc. and the UK Office of Technology Commercialization. The day kicked off at DV8 at Startup Breakfast, an event that happens every Wednesday that offers an opportunity for the startup community to network. Next, SPARK hosted a Gamification luncheon featuring Michael Hartman of Frogdice and Virtual Keystone. Awesome Inc hosted the remainder of the events, including a mentor session with Twyman Clements of Space Tango, an Investor One-on-One session, and 5 Across.



Luke Murray interviews Space Tango CEO and Co-Founder Twyman Clements at Awesome Inc.



Michael Hartman of Frogdice and Virtual Keystone talks about the best and worst practices of gamification, loyalty programs, and e-commerce at Base110.

HERE'S OUR PROOF:

Lexington was recently ranked  
**#8 Best City to Live in America**  
by Money.

Commerce  
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## Talent is Everything – Leadership Visit

On May 8-10, 2019, Commerce Lexington Inc. and many of its key community leaders and business professionals embarked on the organization's 80th annual Leadership Visit presented by Central Bank & Trust Co. Approximately 170 people participated in this year's trip to Raleigh, North Carolina to study the area's successes and challenges in the hopes of further enhancing the Bluegrass Region.

During a session entitled "Talent is Everything," Raleigh leaders discussed the region's data-driven, strategic three-pronged approach to meeting the talent needs of their future. With an equal focus on development, retention, and recruitment, Raleigh's education and business leaders work in partnership to build a strong talent pipeline.

Wake County Economic Development, in partnership with regional economic development organizations, including the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce, Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce, Orange County Economic Development, Chapel Hill – Carrboro Chamber of Commerce, Research Triangle Foundation, and the Research Triangle Regional Partnership, began laying the groundwork for a proactive talent initiative, called "Work in the Triangle, Smarter From Any Angle."

The campaign's goal is to showcase the Triangle nationally and internationally as one of the top destinations for talented professionals in the next five years. It supports the talent recruitment initiative, EDGE 5 – The Leading Edge, a program of the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce, which aims to expand the number of highly skilled employees in target industry sectors and is one of five strategies designed to bring prosperity and growth to the region.

Once the regional leaders had the Work in the Triangle initiative up and running, they realized that they needed to begin conversations about development of the talent pipeline.

They discovered that many of the people involved in the process were trying to do the same thing, so they created a Regional Skills Analysis to better understand what the employer needs were by asking employers directly. They looked at what their forward needs were going to be, in order to better align and produce talent and results.

To do this, Wake County Economic Development, the City of Raleigh, and Capital Area Workforce Development Board partnered to survey industry in 15 counties to raise awareness and identify the areas of highest growth and skills needs in the Research Triangle region. They surveyed industry across ten sectors, and engaged more than 50 partners, including chambers, industry associations, and other stakeholders.

### *Key findings of that Regional Skills Analysis included the following:*

- Area employers are expected to hire 36,000 people over three years.
- Construction & Skilled Trades had the lowest evaluation of Raleigh's talent pipeline. Life sciences had the highest evaluation.
- 87% of IT companies planned to add employees—none indicated a decline.
- Companies were mostly sourcing talent through friends and networks.
- All industries cited critical thinking, taking initiative, and responsibility/self-discipline as the most difficult soft skills to find.



Talent is Everything panel during the Leadership Visit in Raleigh.

# BUSINESS AND EDUCATION NETWORK



## Teacher Externship Program

This June, The Academies of Lexington launched the first annual teacher externship program with 30 teachers from the three Academy Schools: Bryan Station High School, Tates Creek High School, and Frederick Douglass High School. The teachers represented multiple disciplines including English, math, social studies, and career and technical education and worked with local businesses for one week.

A teacher externship is a professional learning opportunity that allows educators to complete a period of service in a workplace. The purpose of a teacher externship is for teachers to engage in activities in business and industry to learn how classroom content and learning strategies are applied in the workplace. Mike Reynolds, LBX's director of human resources, said, "It was great meeting some of our local educators to talk about how we can work together."

Other partner businesses included Lexmark, Bluegrass Care Navigators, ArchVision, LFUCG Emergency 911 Call Center, Able Engine, Fusioncorp, and CHI St. Joseph Health.



Bryan Station High School teachers participate in the Teaching Externship program with Luther Andal with Able Engine.



Tates Creek High School teachers meeting with Randall Stevens at ArchVision.

Teachers will improve their instructive practices by incorporating new methods, labor market information, and employment skills that meet current industry standards. The externship experience helps teachers connect classroom content with students' career interests and helps students develop both the academic and technical skills required in the world they are preparing to enter. Nick Rider, Manager of Business Operations at CHI St. Joseph Health said, "The teachers were exceptional! They were very engaged and did an excellent job turning our discussion into potential curriculum/projects for the students."

Through this process, business partners are making a positive impact on classroom curriculum and instructional practices and aid in preparing students with the skills they need to enter the workforce. Michael Baer, Fusioncorp's President, said, "I would encourage every business to take part in something like this, and I am a great advocate for instituting more real-world business experiences into the educational environment."



Tates Creek High School teachers meet with Lexmark during the externship program.

# COMMUNITY AND MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

## Minority Business Development & Supplier Diversity – 50th Anniversary

This event took place on April 9th at the Lyric Theatre and was a major highlight of the quarter. In partnership with Fayette County Public Schools, Urban League of Lexington-Fayette County, Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government, and others, Commerce Lexington Inc. co-sponsored the 50th Anniversary of the Minority Business Development and Supplier Diversity event featuring a Lexington perspective. A video was produced chronicling some of the key events and opportunities that have enhanced minority business development in Lexington and the nation.



Renee Shaw of KET was the moderator.



The first panel included Raymond Smith of Park Community Credit Union, P.G. Peoples of the Urban League, and Bob Quick of Commerce Lexington Inc.

### HERE'S OUR PROOF

- 19** MEETINGS WITH MINORITY BUSINESSES
- 12** WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES ASSISTED
- 14** EXISTING BUSINESS CALLS
- \$304,000** IN PROCUREMENT DURING THE QUARTER
- \$2,700,000** IN ACCESS LOANS

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800.341.1100  
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## Joint Utility Reception

On April 11th, our team attended the Joint Utility Reception hosted by LG&E-KU and other utilities in Louisville. The goal of the reception was to assist in the creation of business opportunities for diverse businesses. It was a great networking opportunity, and we distributed our listings and capability statements from our Minority Business Accelerator clients to key decision-makers from host companies, prime consultants, and general contractors. We also offered a limited Commerce Lexington Inc. member listing in hopes they might receive calls from some of the professionals at the reception.

Reception entry at the Olmsted in Louisville.

## SOAR

On June 4th, we spoke to a group of young executives that are mentored by the group SOAR. SOAR's mission is to collaborate with forward thinking global and Fortune 500 companies to optimize their talent pipeline and accelerate the advancement of black males. SOAR members heard a speech on negotiating and asked questions about the minority business opportunities in the Lexington area.

## KCTCS Supplier Diversity Event

The Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) held its Summer Supplier Diversity event on May 21st. Tyrone Tyra offered a speech on the partnership with KCTCS and other large entities in Lexington and Central Kentucky. There were over 100 businesses in attendance.