

# Expanding industries honored

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Announcements of new industries grab the headlines, but it's the existing companies that produce the greatest benefits to local economies, a state official said here Tuesday night.

"The economic impact of existing businesses far surpasses all other activity" in the state, Ken Robinson, the new deputy commissioner for existing business in the Kentucky Economic Development Cabinet, said.

He addressed some 50 representatives of industries at the first-ever industry appreciation and recognition reception hosted by the Northwest Kentucky Forward regional economic development agency.

Robinson applauded Henderson, Union, Webster and McLean counties for banding together to help existing industries expand and to recruit new companies.

"I can't say enough good things about your area," said Robinson, who formerly was the economic development agent in Evansville.

He credited Kevin Sheilley, the president and CEO of Northwest Kentucky Forward, and the agency's chairman, Henderson businessman Jon Sights, for their role in expanding the organization's vision to the four counties.

"I like what Jon and Kevin have done, remaking it into Northwest Kentucky Forward," Robinson said.

"It says a lot about who you are and where you are and where you are going," he said.

"I think it's wonderful you are not just talking about regional economic development activities, but that you've done it," Robinson said. "It's a lot harder to do it than just talk about it."

In the meantime, he said, "Existing businesses need to be acknowledged," particularly when they expand their facilities and add employees

The existing industries in the four counties that have expanded over the past year and that created, or are expected to create, 15 or more additional jobs include:

- Allstate Tower, Corydon, \$850,000 expansion, 29 new jobs.
- Fresh Meals Solutions, Uniontown, \$4.5 million expansion, 120 new jobs.

- Hercules Manufacturing, Henderson, \$7.1 million expansion, 50 new jobs.

- Matrix Composites, Henderson, \$200,000 expansion, 15 new jobs.

- Ray-Loc, Morganfield, \$915,000 expansion, 50 new jobs.

- Royster's Machine Shop, Henderson, \$500,000 expansion, 20 new jobs.

- Scott Industries, Henderson, \$2.75 million expansion, 15 new jobs.

- Service Tool and Plastics, Henderson, \$100,000 expansion, 15 new jobs.

- Shamrock Industries, Henderson, \$1.6 million expansion, 21 new jobs.

Total: \$18.5 million in expansions creating 335 new jobs.

Those expansions were aided by \$3.6 million in state tax incentives, primarily through the Kentucky Industrial Development Authority, or KIDA.