



Progress Authority

Resources for Development, Progress for People



Annual Report

Jody Place

Progress Authority Welcomes New President

The Progress Authority is proud to welcome Jody Place as its newest President. Jody was elected to take the reins from Paul Kreischer, who resigned as President after 15 years.

Jody has been a board member since 2002, serving as Secretary after the passing of Robert Sheets in 2014. Jody has been very instrumental in helping to further the Progress Authority's goals, being named our Citizen of the Year in 2006. Jody is Manager of External Affairs for Penelec, and has been with Penelec since 1984, beginning in Customer Service.

As well as the Progress Authority, Jody serves on the Board of Directors for Guthrie Towanda Memorial Hospital, Bradford County United Way, and the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission. She also is a trustee for the Guthrie Healthcare System and a member of the Bradford County Advisory Board for the Community Foundation for the Twin Tiers.

Jody lives in Towanda with her husband, Dr. Rob Place, and her two sons, Zach and Nick.

We thank Jody for her dedication to the Progress Authority, and look forward to her insight and support going forward.

Message from the President

I was honored in January to begin my term as President of the Board of Directors of the Central Bradford Progress Authority. My career in the electric utility industry includes 30 plus years and has afforded me the opportunity to work in many different aspects of business.

Currently, I am the Manager of External Affairs for First Energy with responsibility for Penelec's territory in northeastern Pennsylvania. I was elected to the Central Bradford Progress Authority Board in 2002.

I am proud to be following the footsteps of a great past President, Paul Kreischer, who has been a friend and mentor over the years. His leadership has been widely recognized throughout the community.

The Central Bradford Progress Authority has a strong history of success in business assistance, infrastructure development and redevelopment. I am committed to the continued success of the organization and look forward to many new opportunities.

STAFF:

Anthony J. Ventello
Executive Director

Christopher Brown
Economic Development Specialist

Kim Fairchild
Administrative Assistant

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Director's Message



Almost every conversation I engage in begins with "so, what's going on in the county?" This year's discussion had to acknowledge the slow economy, area layoffs, the downturn in natural gas development and its residual effect on area businesses.

In October 2015, I was asked to present examples and trends in natural gas value-added utilization at the Penn State Natural Gas Utilization Conference without fully understanding what it would involve. As it was prepared, I was very impressed with the many examples of how we were utilizing our great natural gas resource locally and adding value before it could be transported out of the region. Examples of energy generation, compressed natural gas use (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), gas to liquid (GTL), hydrogen cracking from natural gas, improved distribution, combined heat and power projects (CHP), industry use, infrastructure enhancement, residential use and benefits from Act 13 funding, all played a key role in enhancing economic opportunities. I was truly amazed at how our county has responded relative to the rest of Pennsylvania. Follow up discussions from the presentation with representatives throughout the state verified our advanced use of natural gas.

We are also working directly with our core industries who will consider a potential co-habitant that may enhance their operations by utilizing

existing industrial campus capacity via land, unused buildings, infrastructure, secure locations, shared services and designed improvements such as combined heat and power, that can provide a benefit to both entities, not to mention the ability to expedite a new business by rapidly providing for its investment and job creation. Our best resources are here, but we must maximize our opportunities.

The Progress Authority has nearly completed an industrial site inventory which has compiled sites and critical data about those sites to be provided to prospects immediately via electronic transfer. The data will be maintained so it stays current and useful and readily available.

The Authority's revolving loan fund has made substantial investments in local businesses thus encouraging greater private investment and job enhancement.

Our resource-based companies remain strong with regards to wood and agricultural products. All recent research from the Penn State Agricultural Extension has proven that agricultural business activity in the county is increasing. Further supporting data has shown that the Marcellus gas development has only enhanced agricultural activity in the county. Bradford County continues to be one of the top ten agricultural producing counties in the state. Interestingly, not one of the other 9 counties contain a natural gas well, and all are located in the south central part of Pennsylvania. Additionally, the natural gas industry has financially bolstered farming activity and kept land in large parcels, which is conducive to agriculture, our rural way of life, which also supports the tourism industry.

The Progress Authority is assisting Bradford County with the improvement of broadband service. The need for improved telecommunications respects no boundaries, as we are just as dependent on good service as those in urban economies. The

countywide telecommunications improvement project has just begun, but it is critical to business development in Bradford County, as it allows vital connectivity for business development and daily activity.

I must acknowledge our County Commissioners and their progressive efforts to take a leadership role in telecommunications issues. Additionally, the County Commissioners invested Act 13 funds received from natural gas development back into the community to help complete important projects for communities and economic development.

Finally, I must acknowledge with great respect our past president, Paul Kreischer, who has stepped down as the Authority president after 15 years of service. His sincere interest, service and willingness to help with Authority programs and administration was outstanding. He will continue to serve as a founding board member as the Authority begins its 24th year of service. Paul and his wife Marge have taken some much deserved vacation time at their Florida residence during the winter months. However, Paul's interest in Authority affairs was evident with his desire for updates and maintaining communication with staff while in Florida. I again thank him for his dedication.

I am also excited to work with our newly elected executive committee team and president Jody Place. Jody brings strong leadership with her expertise, education and community involvement. I must acknowledge and am very grateful to the Progress Authority's staff Kim Fairchild and Chris Brown, who make our success happen.

I remain fully committed to assisting in creating investment and employment opportunities for the citizens of Bradford County.

*Anthony J. Ventello,
Executive Director*

Keynote Speaker - Denise Brinley

Special Assistant to the Secretary – Strategic Industry Initiatives

Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development

Denise Brinley is the Special Assistant to the Secretary for Strategic Industry Initiatives. In this role, she assists the agency with developing investment, business development, and recruitment strategies for the Commonwealth. Pennsylvania's access to natural gas, the upcoming pipeline infrastructure build out, impaired properties that hold great potential for redevelopment, and the existing industrial and manufacturing base position the Commonwealth for sustained economic growth – and will be key areas of focus for Ms. Brinley.

Her position includes building effective relationships with private companies, public officials, federal and state agencies, non-government organizations, and other partners to further the agency's strategic agenda. She focuses

on partnership-building, both internally and externally, and developing major departmental initiatives that demonstrate the inextricable links between economic and community development, the private and public sectors, and the economy and the environment.



Most recently, Denise served as vice president and principal environmental consultant in TRC Corporation's Harrisburg office, focusing primarily on

natural gas, wetland mitigation banking, and brownfield redevelopment. Prior to joining TRC, Brinley served as director of DEP's Bureau of Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields, where she oversaw the Commonwealth's comprehensive environmental cleanup programs, including the redevelopment of brownfield sites.

Ms. Brinley also served as Deputy Secretary of the Office of Community Revitalization and Local Government Support, where she forged partnerships with economic and industrial development associations, local governments, private developers and the business community. She has a bachelor's degree in geoscience from Franklin and Marshall College, in Lancaster, and a master's degree in geology from the University of Maryland at College Park.

County Tourism Promotion Moves Forward

With the formation of the new Bradford County Tourism Promotion Agency (BCTPA) in 2015, organizational events and tourism-supported businesses are starting to experience the results of the efforts of Executive Director, Robyn Chamberlain and the board of 11 representing all areas and industries of Bradford County. The three pillars of the organization have served as guiding principles contributing to its early success; developing Bradford County within its borders, growing tourism outside its borders, and assisting the County's non-profit organizations through the room tax grant program. Because the BCTPA is funded by the hotel occupancy tax, focusing on these three pillars help strengthen and promote the tourism activities in the area and the businesses in which it supports.

Bradford County has five very active Chambers of Commerce. Robyn attends each monthly meeting and works closely with each Executive Director/Board of Directors in collecting and cross-promoting the events that happen within the county. In doing so, Robyn has been able to expand the scope of advertising not

just throughout the county, but to surrounding counties as well. In turn, many events have seen increased attendance and sustained viability moving forward.

With the recent logo reveal and launch, the BCTPA truly embraces their slogan: Endless Opportunities. Robyn firmly believes Bradford County has something to offer every one of all ages. Expanding the promotion of events outside of Bradford County creates new opportunities for tourism. Through the BCTPA's partnerships with the Route 6 Alliance, VisitPA.com, Where & When Magazine, and Mountain Home Magazine to name a few, attendees are traveling from further distances. Visitors are taking advantage of not only special events that are occurring, but also the wide variety of activities available for the outdoors, music and theatre productions, antique and quilt shops, wineries and breweries, and the county's rich history displayed in the many museums and libraries.

While it is exciting for events to do well and new events to form, the room tax grant program offers another valuable opportunity for the County's

non-profit organizations to expand their scope of marketing and promotion. The BCTPA's Room Tax Grant program begins its annual cycle each fall and distributes 30% of the County's hotel occupancy tax to qualified applicants. In 2015, the BCTPA awarded over \$116k to area non-profits to assist in the growth and development of area programs and events.

Although the BCTPA is still in the early stages of development, the value brought to the County since its formation cannot be denied. All businesses and organizations are encouraged to actively share their events and promotions with the BCTPA through the Agency's website www.visitbradfordcounty.com or by calling the office at 570.265.TOUR. The BCTPA is located at 1 Elizabeth Street, Suite 9 in Towanda, PA in the Progress Authority Building. Feel free to stop by and say hello!



Power Generation Projects Lead New Investment

Bradford County has received substantial new investment in gas powered electrical generation and combined



IMG - Auburn Station.

heat and power projects. Projects are either near completion, under construction or in planning and design.

With the availability of record low-cost local natural gas, project performances now make economic sense. Rising electrical costs and cheap fuel stock have promoted strong interest in electric and thermal generation. Some of the projects, such as Panda Energy located in Asylum Township, are completed and

should be on line by the end of March. This project represents 829 megawatts of electrical power all produced with Marcellus natural gas. This project represents nearly \$1 billion in new investment and creates 40 jobs, as well as supports numerous secondary businesses throughout our region.

IMG has begun construction of two of their six planned generation stations. These new projects are located throughout Bradford County and each provide 20 megawatts of electrical power. Each project involves \$20 million of new investment. It also supports 7 – 10 new jobs.

We have also been made aware of several other electrical generation projects either in planning or having acquired site control based on certain location criteria.

Cogeneration, or combined heat and power, projects are also under consideration for construction. Guthrie Health has moved forward with a combined heat and power project which

should begin construction in April 2016 and be completed by November 2016. Complete commissioning and startup



Panda Energy.

should happen in February of 2017.

Area industries with existing co-generation are now running them as a result of very favorable natural gas pricing. Also, large manufacturers are in feasibility planning for combined heat and power as the future of natural gas pricing is projected to stay low. Needless to say, these projects continue to be on the forefront of new investment and job development in Bradford County.

Bradford County Infrastructure Bank Program Closes First Loan

The Bradford County Commissioners, assisted by the Progress Authority, closed their first Infrastructure Bank loan. The start-up program was designed to help municipalities perform needed infrastructure upgrades.

The loans are available to municipalities, municipal authorities and other municipal-sponsored entities within the county. The short-term loans are designed to bridge the gap while waiting for pending grant funds or other

incoming revenue to fund infrastructure.

The first closing was the 400 Main Street/Parking Garage in Towanda Borough. A \$2.8 million low interest, short-term bridge financing loan is being utilized for construction with the loan eventually being taken out with leveraged state grant and private financing matching funds.

For more information about the program, please contact the Progress Authority at 570-265-0937, or email at cbpa@epix.net.



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County Broadband Initiative

High-speed Internet is quickly becoming as integral to economic development as sewer and water infrastruc-



ture or three-phase power. What was once a convenience to many businesses and residents alike, is now a vital means of communication and daily operations. Unfortunately, because of our county's rural nature, the availability of true

high-speed Internet services is limited in areas that are less densely populated. A lack of infrastructure seriously limits the capabilities of providers to provide the high-speed service.

To effectively build the infrastructure that would extend their services to the more rural areas of the county is very capital intensive and companies often do a cost/benefit analysis to determine whether or not that extension is feasible. Often the analysis confirms that the benefit of expanding into less populated areas does not outweigh the capital expense, leaving the commercial and residential customers in that area few options when selecting a high-speed Internet service. As a result, the Internet speeds that the rural businesses and customers receive are very slow, even though the costs remain the same as customers in more populated

areas. Many feel that they are not getting the service that they are paying for and have voiced their concerns to the Bradford County Commissioners. The commissioners have made solving this dilemma a top priority. They have met with local and regional Internet service providers to understand why there is a high-speed deficit in the county and what would be needed to correct the situation. The commissioners have also hired an engineer that specializes in high-speed networks who will serve as a technical advisor as they explore options to improve Internet service in the county. They firmly believe that high-speed Internet service is obtainable for anyone in Bradford County who desires it, and will work diligently to achieve this goal through the effective co-operation of all Internet service providers and resources in the region.

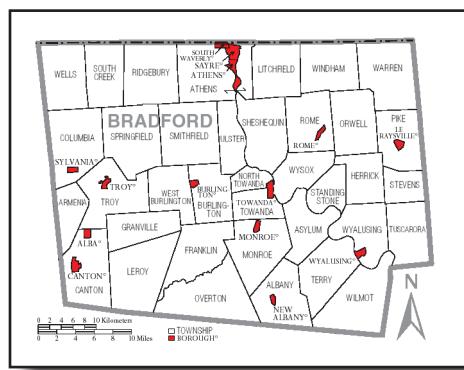
Site Inventory Completed

The Progress Authority, in concert with Hunt Engineering, completed a new site inventory for prospective industrial development sites. With the use of GIS (geographic information systems) and the development of a site specific data base, staff can target and respond for new business site requests. With the use of Act 13 funding approved by the County Commissioners, the data base includes site description, aerial photography, land use description, infrastructure availability such as sewer, water, natural gas, electric and telecommunications, location and sizing, existing improvement descriptions, key contacts and any available data

that would be considered useful to a prospective industrial occupant. We can also attach critical site studies such as soils, wetlands, archeology, etc. if they exist.

The inventory will be accessible through our website and we will be capable of transmitting the data digitally as requested to expedite requests. Most importantly, we intend to maintain the site inventory to keep it up-to-date and useful on a regular basis. The Authority will also be requesting sites that may not be known to the general public but may have a benefit for industrial development purposes. We will work with local realtors and landowners to make sure relevant listings

are included. However, all commercial sites may not be part of the inventory as we will determine their relevance to requested development characteristics.



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2015 Annual RLF Report

It was a busy year for The Progress Authority Revolving Loan Fund. There were a total of nine loans closed in 2015 totaling \$1,070,000. These loans helped create 51 new jobs in the region and supported retaining 91 existing jobs. \$1,856,600 of private investment were also leveraged.



Metadyne.

Highlights include:

Brady and Mandy Leichty; Brian Sr. and Linda Kennedy; and Patrick and Dorinda Kennedy have formed Bluestone Brewing Company, LLC. The company constructed a 3200 sq. ft brew pub in Sayre, PA that also features a 1500 sq. ft. bluestone patio that is used for outdoor

service and entertainment during warmer months. The owners have established a comfortable and relaxing brewpub atmosphere while incorporating an appreciation for the outdoors and our local environment. This project was made possible by the cooperation of a local bank and two local economic development agencies.

Ryan Napp, of Napp Chiropractic, purchased the former Weigh Station building in Towanda to relocate his chiropractic office. The Progress Authority participated with a local bank to help facilitate this purchase and renovate the building. Napp started his practice four years ago at his Hospital Drive location. His book of business grew drastically, and he quickly exceeded the capacity of that location. The new space will allow Dr. Napp to expand his practice even further while offering services that would never had been possible at the North Towanda location.

Metadyne upgraded the electrical service at the plant. As the manufacturing process evolved over the years, new electrical panels were added and tied into the system as new equipment was added.

This led to a very disjointed central panel box system with certain machines not being able to be run simultaneously. The new system consolidated the services for all existing equipment and also added capacity for future expansions.

Lubbering Corp. purchased a new



Bluestone Brewery.

CNC turning center for their operation in Troy, PA. Lubbering Corp. designs, develops, and machines assembly tools that are used in the automotive and aerospace industries. Their tools are used by every car manufacturer in the world and sales exploded in 2015 causing the need for the new equipment to keep up with demand.

Utilizing Existing Business Capacity

As the second largest geographic/agronomy based county, Bradford County is home to both sophisticated resource-based and high technology companies. Through an ongoing effort to meet with key business principals, the Progress Authority gains insight on business needs and issues that could benefit business opportunities and investment. With the recent downturn in our technology sector, capacity for new business has been identified within certain

industrial campuses. These locations have available building space, infrastructure, security, services and synergistic opportunities for related or unrelated cohabitants on their existing campuses.

Strong interest for facilitating cohabitation on our campuses will utilize existing capacity and minimally help reduce fixed costs or provide opportunities for new business on shared needs, such as existing services, cogeneration, or new product development.

The Progress Authority is constantly aware and searching for opportunities to enhance our existing industrial capacity by utilizing our industrial campuses' identified capacity. This can facilitate new business opportunities and also retain and create employment and investment in the fastest, most cost effective way. We can maximize business prospecting in a most efficient way and develop relationships for future expansion in a responsive manner.



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Northern Tier PREP Update

Working Together Toward Success

PREP (Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance) is Pennsylvania's statewide network of economic development service providers working together to deliver vital business assistance services across the 10 regions of the commonwealth. The PREP network consists of trained and experienced experts, assistance and resources, one-on-one counseling, specialized workshops, online training, and financial incentives.

In the Northern Tier, the PREP network of partners includes the Progress Authority, Tioga County Development Corporation, Sullivan County Planning and Development, Wyoming County Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) from the University of Scranton and Wilkes University, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center, Penn State's PennTAP, and NTRPDC, which serves as the PREP regional coordinator. Working together in a coordinated fashion, the Northern Tier PREP network continues to produce results in assisting our entrepreneurs and business clients with real-world problems.

Success Stories: Helping Local Businesses

*Bluestone Brewing Company, LLC,
Sayre, Bradford County*

With the goal of becoming the "premier brewpub destination in the Twin Tiers," Brady Liechty and his business partners worked with the University of Scranton SBDC to develop a business plan for Bluestone Brewing Company, LLC, better understand their

target market, and develop a financial projection analysis. Funding for their start-up came from Peoples State Bank and PREP partner Central Bradford Progress Authority, with a total project cost of \$575,000.

SBDC consultants assisted with Bluestone Brewing Company's social media pre-launch marketing and continuity planning. The SBDC continues to work with Bluestone Brewing Company to develop ideas for craft brew marketing in the region and tourism signage.

Value-Added Natural Gas Development:

In September, the PREP Partners brought together more than 30 industry leaders and public officials for the Northern Tier Shale Gas Network roundtable. Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) Commissioner Pam Witmer attended and discussed the PUC's role in natural gas distribution in our region and beyond.

The progression of shale gas development in Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, and Wyoming counties continues to have a profound impact on our region—now and into the foreseeable future. A critical piece to the sustainable development of our region is promoting value-added natural gas use and utilizing the resource here locally to promote sound and efficient development.

Helping Businesses Grow and Expand:

To help spread the word about its services, NTRPDC business services and workforce development staff conducted workshops in each of the region's five counties in October and November. The workshops brought together



PREP partners, businesses, educational institutions, and other organizations to discuss services available for businesses in the region. NTRPDC staff highlighted finance, export, procurement, and workforce development assistance available. Topics discussed included lending assistance, exporting, government procurement, and the workforce needs of the local economy.

Governor's Impact Awards:

For the third consecutive year, Pennsylvania companies and entrepreneurs were honored for their positive contribution to the state's economy at the Governor's Impact Awards, where 17 Northern Tier businesses were honored.

The Governor's Impact Awards recognized companies from throughout the state in five categories: Jobs First, Community Impact, Small Business Impact, Entrepreneurial Impact, and Export Impact. Nominations were provided by the state's 10 PREP networks, with a total of more than 200 nominations.

More than 600 people attended the May 21, 2015, awards ceremony in Hershey.

The five Northern Tier businesses selected were: Community Impact Award – Southwestern Energy Company (Tunkhannock); Entrepreneur Impact Award – The Wellsboro House (Wellsboro); Export Impact Award – Channel Veneers USA (Troy); Jobs First – Cargill Meat Solutions (Wyalusing); and Small Business Impact Award – Penn Troy Manufacturing, Inc. (Troy).



RSJ Technologies, LLC.

RSJ Technologies, LLC is a specialty machine shop located in Canton, PA. The company specializes in machining



Employees working.

precise component parts that are used in the munitions and aeronautics industries. Their products range from a specifically designed and milled

screw that is used on soldiers' night vision goggles to large fasteners used on aircraft carriers.

Their reputation for exacting precision and dependability has allowed them to secure major contracts with Lockheed Martin that will require the shop to double its production by the spring of 2016. To accomplish this ambitious production goal, Gary Jolly, managing partner of RSJ Technologies, needed to purchase multiple pieces of equipment and will hire as many as 25 new employees. This expansion is a major win for the job market in the Canton area as the community has suffered many job losses as a result of the slowing natural gas industry in the region.

The Progress Authority helped facilitate the financing of the equipment and

Mr. Jolly has been able to utilize local employment outreach services to hire the most qualified candidates to fill the new



Gary Jolly, Owner.

positions. RSJ Technologies, LLC is a great success story in Bradford County and speaks to the highly skilled machining capabilities that our region is known for.

Agri-Business on the Rise

Recent data from the Penn State Agricultural Extension Marcellus Center for Outreach and Research (MCOR) and the USDA National Ag Statistics Service of Pennsylvania suggest that agricultural production in Bradford County is increasing. Interestingly, between 2001 and 2008, dairy cow numbers throughout Pennsylvania and the Marcellus region inclusive of Bradford County were on a substantial decline. Since 2008, which is around the time Marcellus gas development started, cattle numbers stabilized. It is understood that natural gas production provided much-needed income to farmers to help support the farm income. In many cases, the revenues received from natural gas were invested in the farm with purchases of new machinery and equipment,

building improvements and additional farmland. Natural gas development has kept land in large parcels, which is conducive to agriculture and our rural way of life. It also has enhanced tourism.

Historical data proves that beyond the economic support of agriculture, natural gas development has been a complimentary land use. Bradford County continues to be amongst the top ten agricultural counties in Pennsylvania, typically one of the top two in dairy production. Penn State Extension data identifies the other nine counties are located in the south central to southeast region of Pennsylvania, none of which have a Marcellus gas well drilled within them. Average farm size in Bradford County is 180 acres for

dairy production, which is much larger than the average farm in Pennsylvania, which is 78 – 123 acres, this supporting the ag land preservation and large parcel retainage from mineral extraction.

Further emphasizing the increase in agricultural production in Bradford County and throughout the Northern Tier is the expansion in corn, soybean, beef, swine and niche farming such as maple syrup, orchards, etc. Even with current low milk pricing, Bradford County has an optimistic agri-business forecast. With available farmland, an agriculture-friendly community, agricultural support services and abundant water, our farming heritage can expand and continue to be the greatest economic driver in Bradford County.

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Progress Authority Director Presents at Multi-State Conference

In October 2015, Executive Director Tony Ventello was asked to be a panel member at the Penn State Natural Gas Utilization Conference held in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania. Mr. Ventello was asked to present examples of value-added utilization of natural gas in our Northern Tier region. His research identified numerous examples of the vertical integration of natural gas by improving its use in the area beyond gas well development.

Examples of improved distribution to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals and public buildings were easily identified as primary end users receiving the benefits of low-cost natural gas. Continued critical pipeline construction was emphasized as fundamental to developing commercial and industrial gas use opportunities.

Electrical power generation leads new investment with the construction of new large and small scale generation stations in the region, recognizing over \$1.2 billion of new investment in our area. Further emphasizing natural gas utilization is the planning and development of combined heat and power projects (CHP). These projects develop on-site electrical generation and thermal demand for both electrical and steam power users. The use of low-cost natural gas has made these projects feasible.

The development of compressed natural gas fueling stations (CNG) has also made the infrastructure available for vehicular use of natural gas to both the general public, private business

and public transportation.

The Proctor & Gamble model of developing their own natural gas wells utilizing the gas for combined heat and power (cogeneration), CNG and putting excess electricity and gas back into the grid and pipeline is a model for worldwide recognition. The development of liquefied natural gas (LNG) facilities is underway, again, concentrating the resource to be transported to locations without a pipeline for use. The recent completion of GTP's thermal cracking facility makes hydrogen from natural gas for their manufacturing facility. It nearly eliminates the importing of hydrogen to the plant of which supplies can be interrupted.

Identified were several projects planning gas to liquids (GTL). These value-added products can be fuels, waxes, lube oils, methanol and many other products derived from natural gas.

The processing of gas field wastewater can be seen as a value-added waste stream from gas field to development and production. The crystallizing of chloride for several uses is again the vertical integration of natural gas drilling. Further emphasized to the attendees were the benefits of Act 13 revenues received by Bradford County from gas production. Benefits of housing, infrastructure, and economic development were identified as beneficial examples of natural gas drilling. Additionally, Act 13 has attracted new investment for job development with funding business site assessments and grants to municipalities.

Overall, numerous examples of natural gas utilization and benefits were presented. The presentation has been followed up by several requests for information by prospective businesses and publications.

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Bradford County Awards Act 13 Grant Funding

The Bradford County Board of Commissioners determined that the best interests of the communities and residents of Bradford County would be served by distributing a portion of the County's Act 13 funds through a competitive grant process.

While the grant process was focused primarily on economic development related projects that would stimulate job growth and business development, community development projects that addressed the impacts and opportunities associated with the Marcellus Shale industry were also considered.

The Progress Authority partnered with the commissioners to facilitate the grant process and \$1,383,000 of Act 13 funds were granted to projects throughout the County. This was an excellent opportunity for the County to receive community input and participation in administering the Act 13 funds.

A list of projects can be found in the table to the right:

Progress Authority	Bishop Corporate Industrial Park Feasibility Study	\$25,000
Progress Authority	Hurley Multi Business Center	\$40,000
Standing Stone Township	Standing Stone Township Zoning Ordinance	\$10,000
Sayre Incubator, Inc.	Window Replacement	\$39,000
Habitat for Humanity	Build single family home for low income family	\$40,000
Towanda Municipal Authority	Improve water system in North Towanda	\$500,000
Borough of Sayre	Reconstruction and repaving of Cayute Street	\$150,000
Animal Care Sanctuary	Replacement of aging waterline and repairs	\$30,000
Bradford County Regional Arts	Replace and restore deteriorated marquee at Sayre	\$90,000
Alparon Community Park, Inc.	Upgrade walking and driving lanes in park	\$90,000
Bradford County Veterans Memorial	Create unique statue for park	\$167,000
Heritage Village and Farm Museum	Move and restore Dr. Campbell office	\$12,500
Canton Borough	Paint and upgrade bath house at pool	\$10,400
Heritate Association	Install concrete sidewalks	\$18,000
Rekindle the Spirit, Inc.	Construct a display area for agricultural equipment	\$23,060
Winding River Players, Inc.	Increase curb appeal of exterior of building	\$20,000
Troy Borough	Traffic light upgrade	\$57,325
Athens Township	Document imaging management	\$10,000
South Waverly Township	Repair and install security	\$36,064
Towanda Area Youth Soccer Association	Create a central location for the Association to have soccer fields for all players in the organization	\$15,000
TOTAL FUNDS		\$1,383,349

Business Initiative Task Force

In light of a more recent volatile local economy, the Progress Authority formed a Business Initiative Task Force to intensify economic

development efforts in the county. This task force focused on meeting directly with critical business managers in the county's largest employers to address the issues and challenges those companies face in executing their respective business plans. This effort is intended to spur greater investment and expansion opportunities for the major

employers of Bradford County. The task force consists of Dr. Raman Daga, President of Metadyne, Inc.; Henry C. Dunn, Chairman of Henry Dunn, Inc.; John Estep, Owner of Lubbering Corp.; Paul Kreischer, Former President of the Progress Authority; Frank Pinkosky, Executive Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer of Guthrie; Tony Ventello

Continued on Page 11



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and Chris Brown from the Progress Authority; and Bradford County Commissioners Daryl Mill-



er, Doug McLinko and Ed Bustin.

Various meetings were held with the management teams of Guthrie, Masco, Cargill, Jeld Wen, and Dupont throughout 2015. The task force found that while each business/industry had its own particular set of challenges, there were also many similarities.

One resounding challenge that all of the companies expressed was workforce development and stabilization. There is a serious shortage of skilled technical labor that is proficient in plant maintenance, elec-

trical wiring, PLC programming, etc. in Bradford County. Many of these technical skilled positions sit unfilled for months while the company struggles to find qualified candidates.

The stabilization of the entry level workforce also poses a significant challenge for most of the managers that the task force met with. Some companies have faced up to a 30% turnover rate in recent years making hiring and training costs skyrocket. Those involved with the hiring process expressed that entry level applicants lacked the "soft skills" that they look for in potential employees. Proficiencies like interviewing skills, reliability, timeliness, and even the ability to pass a drug test are missing in a large percentage of the applicants and new hires.

While there is no quick fix to these workforce development related challenges, the task force will reach out to local high school, votech, and post-secondary educators to share the insights that they gathered while meeting with the plant managers. From there programs can be developed to educate

those entering the workforce as to what these companies are looking for in a qualified candidate. Also, post-secondary opportunities lie in possible certificate programs that will give the students the skills they will need to fill the technical job vacancies that the plants currently struggle to fill.

The Business Initiative Task Force



is scheduling follow-up meetings with these businesses to present their insights and discuss possible solutions to some of the challenges that were uncovered.

Progress Authority Board Member Update

In January 2016 a new era began for the Progress Authority. Paul Kreischer stepped down after 15 years as Authority President. Dr. Tom Henson also decided to step down as Vice President at the same time. Both will remain as founding board members.

Jody Place, who was serving as Authority Secretary, was elected as the new President of the Progress Authority, along with Kyle Lane as Vice President. Mark Madden will take over for Jody as Secretary, with Phil Kaminsky continuing as Treasurer.

The Authority was saddened by the loss of one of its founding members in 2015. Newman Benson, long-time Wyoresident and financial institution representative from Wyo, passed away. Thomas C. Thompson, III, Vice President of First Citizens Bank and a Wyoresident, was

appointed to fill the position held by Mr. Benson. While we will miss Mr. Benson's presence at our board meetings, we welcome "T" to the board and look forward to his input.

We would like to take this time

to sincerely thank all of our past and present board members for their service and dedication to the Progress Authority. We truly would not be where we are today without their foresight and dedication.





2016 Progress Authority Board Members

Annual Meeting
April 14, 2016

Executive Committee:

Jody Place, President

Philip Kaminsky, Treasurer

Kyle Lane, Vice President

Mark Madden, Secretary

Board Members:

Kim Barnes

Jon Kulick

Dr. Avery Boardman

James Morse

A.J. Brandt

Frank Pinkosky

Donald Brennan

Charmaine Stempel

Henry Dunn

Charlotte Sullivan

David Gordon

Paul Sweitzer

Dr. Thomas Henson

Thomas C. Thompson III

Paul Kreischer

Vacant

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