



PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel, right, chats with Michael Finney, CEO of the Michigan Economic Development Corp. at the opening of the Michigan Defense Center office in Sterling Heights.

GM Opens Center at Tonawanda

TONAWANDA, N.Y. (AP) – General Motors has found a new use for a building that's sat vacant at its Buffalo-area manufacturing complex for seven years. The Detroit automaker says it has created a training center for Tonawanda Engine employees. Plant manager Steve Finch said last week that current and future employees will be taught about quality, safety and manufacturing – topics they'll put to use as the plant

gears up for three new engine lines. The big change at Tonawanda for GM employees working there has been the gradual transition from producing virtually all V8 engines in the 1950s and 1960s to today's more eclectic mix of fuel efficient powertrains. Aircraft engines were produced at the site of the new training center during World War II. Then GM car and truck engines were made there until it closed in 2004.

Michigan Defense Center Relocates to Sterling Hts.

by Gerald Scott
News Dept.
What Macomb County and the Van Dyke / Mound corridor has known since World War II – that it continues to host the nation's proverbial Arsenal of Democracy – became codified last week.

That's because nearly 140 business leaders and government officials gathered in Sterling Heights to celebrate the official opening of the Michigan Defense Center (MDC) at Velocity, which is Macomb County's recently new business incubator. The Michigan Defense Center is an agency of the Michigan Economic Development Corp. (MEDC) that connects defense industry buyers and prime contractors with Michigan-based companies. Relocating its headquarters from the state capitol of Lansing to where the action is, was a strategic decision to increase synergy with area businesses and resources.

Analysis by the Macomb County Dept. of Planning & Economic Development reveals that, over the past decade, Michigan businesses have been awarded more than \$41 billion in Department of Defense contracts. Of that, 63 percent landed in Macomb County, the most of any county in the state. In fact, Macomb County businesses delivered on more than 10,000 DoD contracts between 2000 and 2010.

"Macomb County is the heart of our defense industry, so it makes sense that this is the new home of our state's defense center," said Michael A. Finney, MEDC President and CEO. "This is a sector that is ripe for economic gardening opportunities, and we will continue to work with our partners to grow Michigan businesses and new jobs."

The MDC's purpose is to assist businesses in accessing research and development resources at universities and federal laboratories. It also works in conjunction with 12 regional Procurement Technical Assistance Centers to prepare Michigan businesses to be government contractors. "I applaud the governor and MEDC President Mike

Finney for their decision to relocate the Michigan Defense Center here at Velocity," said Mark Hackel, Macomb County Executive. "This resource helps to create powerful synergy in our efforts to sustain and grow our prowess as the defense capital of the Midwest."

Hackel added that he hopes that the Mound - Van Dyke defense corridor eventually becomes known as the defense capital of the entire world. It's possible, given the metro Detroit area's long history as the Arsenal of Democracy back in the 1940s, when auto production was put aside in favor of war materiél

goods during World War II. "In Macomb County, we design things, we build things, we're automotive, advanced manufacturing and we're defense and homeland security," Hackel added.

"We need to focus more on that and better understand it. "If you think about it, the defense corridor, the defense industry itself . . . travels right through the heart of two of the largest cities in Macomb County, and two of the larger cities in the state of Michigan – Warren and Sterling Heights.

"I was a kid who grew up in the city of Warren and graduated from Sterling Heights

High School. "What I understood back then compared to what I understand now is vastly different. Back then, all I understood about the defense industry was that cool tank (in front of the former Chrysler tank assembly plant) on Van Dyke Avenue in the city of Warren." Today, nearly 500 local businesses do defense and contract work – and now with the relocation of the Michigan Defense Center to the heart of Macomb County, all of those commercial businesses will have easier access to the services and coordination offered by the DSC office.

UDM's Co-op Program 100 Years Old

by Gerald Scott
News Dept.

The University of Detroit Mercy celebrated an interesting centennial anniversary the other day.

It seems that 100 years ago, in 1912, UDM's student co-op and internship programs first began with brand corporate names like Detroit Edison and General Motors.

Today, UDM's student co-op placement program is going on like gangbusters, with most academic areas – including nursing and engineering – requiring students to co-op with an established employer out in the field.

As such, UDM held a big luncheon to celebrate the centennial co-op milestone and that was followed by a busy job fair to match current students with corporate recruiters offering jobs, internships, co-op participation and more.

"The University of Detroit Mercy has been a leader in using new concepts to further its educational aims," the luncheon program read. "When the College of Engineering was first established in 1911, the cooperative education training program became an integral part of its program when third-year, 'pre-junior' students combined classroom studies with "shop" every two weeks.

"In 1922, co-op was then initiated in the Department of Architectural Engineering.



PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

Mascot Tommy Titan presents his resume to an amused recruiter from Quicken Loans at U of D Mercy's student job fair last week.

Since then, countless graduates have benefited from cooperative education in architecture, engineering, nursing, business, health professions, and liberal arts disciplines. UDM adds that cooperative education is now a required component of the Engineering, Architecture, Nursing, 5-Year Physician Assistant and 5-Year Master of Business Administration curriculum and strongly encouraged in most others.

Cooperative education is then reflected on the student's academic transcript distinguishing "co-op" as a structured academic learning experience. Although UDM still co-ops

with the likes of industrial giants GM and Detroit Edison, at the luncheon, the audience was introduced to current students who have used the co-op program to gain entry to the larger workforce. One UDM student used a co-op opportunity with the Department of Homeland Security in Washington, D.C., to the effect that she was hired by the agency to work full-time as an intelligence analyst in Homeland Security's Detroit office.

Another student co-op worked for several thousand hours at Beaumont Hospital and is now on track to become a professional nurse. The gathering was important enough that UDM President Antoine Garibaldi gave the keynote address. The larger event was organized by Sheryl McGriff, dean of the Career Education Center.

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