

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICIALS INVITE LABOR LEADERS**

### **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR RELEASE: December 15, 2008**

**CONTACT: Jim Kurz**, Executive Director, Existing Business Initiative Program  
Lawrenceburg-Anderson County Economic Development Authority  
**Phone: 502-839-5372, ext 25**

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICIALS INVITE LABOR LEADERS**

In its continuing efforts to emphasize workforce issues, the Lawrenceburg-Anderson County Economic Development Authority invited Kentucky Labor leaders to its December 10 Board meeting to talk about Union-sponsored training opportunities in Anderson County.

Ed Willoughby Jr., administrator of Kentucky Laborers' Union local Training Center and Roy West, Louisville-based representative of Laborers' International Union of North America gave a presentation on the Union's Training Center, located on the US 127 By-Pass South.

Established to meet the training needs of the more than 5,000 Kentucky members of the Laborers' International Union, the Center offers more than 60 different types of training classes. Class offerings are divided into two categories – "general" and construction-related. General classes provide instruction in broad areas such as hazardous waste removal. Construction-related classes, which comprise the majority of the Center's offerings, provide specific training such as concrete paving. The Center also offers accredited union apprenticeship training. Classes at the Center are offered at no cost to Union members. Training is paid for by the Kentucky Laborers' Union Trust fund.

The Center's economic impact on Anderson County is significant. Each year, approximately 1,500 to 2,000 Union members attend classes at the center. They spend an estimated \$50,000 to \$55,000 at local eating establishments: Additional income is earned by Anderson County's Best Western Lodge which provides accommodations for attendees.

Those who attend classes at the Center come for a variety of reasons. Many who are currently unemployed, self-enroll in training sessions to improve or acquire new skills. Others currently employed by contractors and other construction-related businesses are sent by their employers to gain expertise to enhance their credentials. When companies bid on private, local, state and federal contracting projects, the credentials of their workers are key factors in the evaluation process.

Today's Union members are different than those of the past. They are smarter and work harder. In exchange, they receive good salaries, sound benefits and a pension. Unfortunately, Union Labor is a career path often overlooked by today's youth.

The Center welcomes the opportunity to work with the Lawrenceburg campus of the Bluegrass Community and Technical College as Union Training Centers in other states have worked with community colleges to offer training classes.

The Union Locals in Kentucky are civic minded and seek opportunities to work with communities to provide First Aid training for county and city fire departments and in cooperation with local organizations, provide labor for small construction projects.

The presentation was concluded with an offer to host a future Authority Board meeting at the Center