



Jefferson County Local Development Corporation

800 Starbuck Avenue, Suite 800 • Watertown, New York 13601

2022 Annual Report

Jefferson County Local Development Corporation (JCLDC)

## CEO's ANNUAL MESSAGE--- 2022

Believe it or not, there is fair amount of economic growth and expansion underway in Jefferson County. Although we still have challenges, there is much reason for optimism. Let me highlight a few examples.

German-owned New York Air Brake is transforming itself into an engineering and machining center of excellence, having just moved a new product line from its parent company in Germany to Watertown. The company's state-of-the-art brake control valve is the only such product to have received unconditional approval by the rail industry. Roth Industries, another German-owned company, expanded their facility this past year in order to add a new production line (and another 8 jobs). MetalCraft Marine announced plans to expand, adding 15 to 25 jobs to its current 26. The Canadian-owned company manufactures high performance aluminum boats for use by the coast guard, the navy, research institutions, fire departments, and more. Its new fireboat was recently recognized as the most significant boat of the year by that industry. Even now, as we begin 2023, Knowlton Technologies, which has a local history of more than 200 years, announced plans to add 20-30 jobs.

New businesses are coming as well. CWT Farms International began construction of a state-of-the-art chick hatchery in Watertown. The 50,000 square foot hatchery will be the largest hatchery in New York State, producing 30 million chicks per year and creating 20 new full-time jobs. Jefferson County is also due to soon host the second largest producer of solar panels in the country. Convalt Energy plans to construct a 315,000 square-foot solar panel manufacturing facility that will employ nearly 400 people within three years. Preliminary site preparation is underway. Assuming construction begins in early 2023, the facility could be operating by early to mid-2024.

The Jefferson County Board of Legislators took the initiative to partner with us in supporting economic recovery. With monies they provided from their allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, our agency administered several grant

programs to support local business recovery from the effects of the pandemic. Through Small Business Productivity and Incumbent Worker Training Grant Programs, as well as a Rental Property Deferred Maintenance program, our own board approved \$ 850,000 in grants for over 90 projects, leveraging an additional \$865,000 dollars in private investment. A portion of those funds also went toward an innovative program to expand the availability of childcare in Jefferson and Lewis Counties. It provided training and assistance to start up a number of home-based daycare providers as well as funding to expand capacity at center-based facilities. The program received recognition in a national publication and interest from across the state.

Progress on the new YMCA Community and Aquatics Center at 146 Arsenal Street is on schedule and due for completion in November of this year. That facility will have a transformative impact on the community—both visually and in terms of the foot traffic it will bring to downtown Watertown. It will be a great complement to the streetscape and façade improvements throughout the city center.

I must point out that behind all that we do is an active and engaged board of directors. These volunteers, commit significant time and energy to governing our agencies, reviewing and approving projects, and providing valuable input and guidance to staff. They make us better, so we can serve you better.

Respectfully,

David J. Zembiec  
Chief Executive Officer

### **Jefferson County Local Development Corporation Mission Statement**

To advance the job opportunities, health, general prosperity and economic welfare of the people of Jefferson County and to improve their recreation opportunities, prosperity and standard of living.

#### **Activities:**

#### **ADVOCATE DRUM / Drum Country Business**

The Drum Country Business initiative includes the Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence County economic development agencies and the Development Authority of the North Country working together through ADVOCATE DRUM promote the tri-county region's collective assets and its proximity to Fort Drum to attract business investment to the region. Funding from the project partners is matched by a grant to ADVOCATE DRUM by project sponsor National Grid. The initiative includes regional advertising and direct outreach to prospective businesses.

This year Drum Country, NY continued to partner with BLK DOG, a digital marketing company to aid in a campaign entitled “Let’s Meet.” This campaign will work through social media, email, and the www.drumcountryNY.com website. All geared to increase engagement with people both inside and outside the area.

### North Country Regional Economic Development Council

JCED staff participates in the Council’s work groups and are actively involved in preparing the regional plan submission as part of the Governor’s annual competition for economic development funding. Staff has also assisted local businesses and organizations in submitting successful funding applications to the program.

### North Country Alliance

The NCA is a private-public alliance of businesses and economic development organizations working together to grow the economy of New York’s seven-county North Country region. JCED is a member organization with a seat on the NCA’s board of directors. The NCA administers a regional revolving loan fund—often in partnership with local revolving loan funds. NCA is also an advocate for ensuring that the region’s economic interests are fairly addressed at the state level.

#### RLF Loans:

	Name of Company	Amount of Loan	Loan Date	Maturity Date	Purpose
1	Clayton Island Tours, LLC	\$ 40,000.00	4/29/2020	5/1/2026	Repair of flood damage and prevent future damage
2	Clayton Yacht Club Inc.	\$ 40,000.00	8/4/2021	8/1/2027	Complete repairs from damage due to high water flooding during the spring and summer of 2019
3	North Branch Farms	\$100,000.00 (ESD Grant \$45,000 (Bal. \$55,000 termed out)	4/26/2017	7/1/2026	Construct and equip a 1,500 sq. ft. combined packing and cold storage house in Belleville, NY
4	WICLDC	\$ 200,000.00	12/1/2010	1/1/2031	Building A roof replacement
5	WICLDC	\$ 98,082.50	9/10/2018	10/1/2023	Renovate portion of Building A to provide additional 33,432 square feet for Jain Irrigation

## ARPA Grants

### Incumbent Worker Training:

<b>Company</b>	<b>Grant Award</b>
LCO Destiny, LLC d/b/a Timeless Frames & Timeless Decor	\$12,000.00
Morgia Wealth Management	\$1,920.00
Renzi Brothers Inc.	\$20,000.00
TF Wright & Sons Foundry	\$5,600.00
Great Lakes Cheese	\$2,800.00
Thousand Islands Winery	\$16,000.00
Coughlin Printing	\$8,000.00
Great Lakes Cheese	\$3,200.00
Spec-Rite/SKIP-LINE, LLC	\$20,000.00
Watertown Family YMCA	\$12,000.00

### Rental Property Deferred Maintenance:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Grant Award</b>
Robert Augliano-Cenzach's Sterling 156, LLC	\$10,000.00
Joel Berthet	\$10,000.00
Mark Bonner	\$10,000.00
Trina Kuan Bonner	\$10,000.00
William Bonner	\$10,000.00
Brian Bromka	\$10,000.00
Carmon Property Holdings	\$10,000.00
Joseph Carr	\$5,600.00
Merri Cole	\$10,000.00
Steven C. Daily	\$10,000.00
Herbert K. Dejourdan	\$8,000.00
Valerie Deon	\$10,000.00
Mary Dietterich	\$10,000.00
Lori Elliott	\$10,000.00
John & Chana Fay	\$8,000.00
Scott (Jennifer) Gerni	\$8,000.00
Michel L. Gravelle	\$9,600.00
Yasmin Habib	\$10,000.00
James Huffman	\$5,600.00
Derrick Kehoe	\$9,600.00
Julie P. Kelly	\$8,000.00
Christopher P. Knapp	\$10,000.00
Bary Kukowski	\$10,000.00

Joseph T. LaFave	\$10,000.00
David Lawton	\$10,000.00
Arlene Martin	\$10,000.00
Stephen McGowan	\$10,000.00
Patrick Merritt	\$10,000.00
Bryan Olson	\$9,600.00
Jeanette Pierce	\$10,000.00
Kyle Pignone	\$10,000.00
Gerald Prout	\$8,000.00
Stephen Rich	\$10,000.00
Yuri Samaroo	\$9,600.00
Reginald J. Schweitzer Jr.	\$10,000.00
Edward & Cindi Smalls	\$10,000.00
Parker Smith	\$10,000.00
Terence Strock	\$10,000.00
Tracy Strock	\$10,000.00
John Tinsley	\$10,000.00
Beth Todd	\$10,000.00
John D. Ward	\$10,000.00
Scott R. Weston	\$10,000.00
Deborah Wilson-Emma Flower	\$10,000.00

Small Business Productivity:

<b>Company</b>	<b>Grant award</b>
Anchor Marina	\$10,000.00
Antique Boat Museum	\$10,000.00
Black River Drive-in, Inc.	\$10,000.00
Cerow Agency, Inc.	\$10,000.00
Chrissy Beanz	\$7,000.00
Franklin Street Dairy Market	\$8,000.00
Gary Trucking, LLC	\$10,000.00
Hutchinson's Board Works	\$5,337.60
Joshua Overton Inc.	\$5,000.00
Mart Art Inc. d/b/a Michael Ringer St. Lawrence Galleries	\$2,252.00
Monthly Boxer	\$7,000.00
MSPEN Consulting	\$2,380.00
RBM Manufacturing Corp.	\$10,000.00
Rhodes Greenhouses Inc.	\$10,000.00
Robbins Family Grain	\$10,000.00
Sail Ontario, LLC	\$3,520.00
Spec-Rite	\$6,000.00

St. Elmo Island, Inc.	\$2,000.00
Stewart Signs & Apparel, LLC	\$4,000.00
Taylor Concrete Products Inc.	\$5,000.00
Telly's Inn	\$8,000.00
The Cape Vincent Brewing Co., Inc.	\$5,000.00
The Little Bookstore	\$3,000.00
Thousand Islands Arts Center	\$5,000.00
White Caps Winery, LLC	\$7,000.00
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Natasha's Kiddie Shack Daycare	\$10,000.00
Lucki 7 Livestock Co. (Stephen Winkler)	\$10,000.00
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St. Lawrence Sales & Marketing	\$10,000.00
Nordmann's Detailing	\$5,000.00
Sheland Farms	\$10,000.00
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Bridgeview Real Estate	\$10,000.00
J. Eberle Woodworking	\$10,000.00
Ebersol's Custom Cutting, Inc.	\$10,000.00
Northern Commercial Cleaning	\$9,973.06
Nugent Carpentry and Remodeling, LLC	\$10,000.00
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Chelsey Wise Photography	\$1,123.20
Hall Pass Tavern	\$4,936.00
MSCORP, LLC d/b/a Exhale Spa and Salon	\$9,192.00
Otter Creek Winery	\$7,596.00

Local Food Resiliency:

<b>Company</b>	<b>Grant Award</b>
Alteri's La Bella Dolce	\$10,000.00
Bechaz Riverdale Cheese & Gelateria	\$40,000.00
Beese Apiaries	\$9,000.00
Busted Grapes LLC	\$9,000.00
Cedar Dell Angus Meats	\$50,000.00
Churchill Farms Honey	\$9,000.00
Cross Roads Fruits and Flowers-declined grant	\$880.00
Ebersol's Custom Cutting, Inc.	\$50,000.00
Elmer Creek Farms	\$10,000.00
Euro Farms	\$1,450.00
Luff Farms, Inc.	\$10,000.00
Maple Chase Farm d/b/a Burnham Maple Products.	\$9,000.00
Maplewood Sweets, LLC	\$9,000.00
Next Generation Creamery/Grimshaw Dairy	\$10,000.00
NNY Windy Acres Nursery, Inc.	\$10,000.00
North Harbor Beef	\$5,888.00

North Harbor Dairy at Old McDonald's Farm	\$50,000.00
Red Wing Farm	\$7,643.49
Riverside Farm NY LLC	\$3,936.00
Running Wild Maple (Steiner's General Store)	\$9,000.00
Sticky Dicks Honey Products	\$9,000.00
*Thousand Islands Winery	\$9,000.00
TI Sauces-declined grant	\$1,202.51
White Caps Winery, LLC	\$9,000.00
Wise Choice Cuts, LLC	\$50,000.00
Zoar Tapatree Co LP	<u>\$10,000.00</u>
TI Sauces and	\$1,202.51

## 2022 – Growing Local Food Production

**Jefferson County Food Resiliency Program.** During 2022, our agricultural economic development efforts focused on growing our local food supply. Thanks to funding provided from the Jefferson County Board of Legislators from the American Recovery Act, Jefferson County Economic Development (JCED) initiated the Jefferson County Food Resiliency program. The goal of the program was to assist local food processors and farms in growing our supply of local food and beverages.

The idea behind this project was born from the food shortages that occurred during the COVID – 19 pandemic of 2020 and 2021. During the pandemic, supply chain disruptions and workforce problems led to food supply problems across the United States. We saw many major food distribution events to help feed people who were out of work or could not find food needed to feed families on store shelves. Many began looking to our local farms and food processors to obtain food for their families.

Together with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County, JCED created a small grants program to provide funding to increase the production of local food. With \$400,000 provided by Jefferson County, small grants were provided to 26 projects that will increase the processing of vegetables, fruit, meat products, dairy products, maple syrup, wine and honey. The projects are being implemented and will be monitored for five years to insure the wise use of taxpayer funds. Through this grant program, we are helping our local farm and food processing businesses to meet current and future demands for local food products and have a strong positive impact on our economy.

**Agriculture’s Economic Impact in NNY.** As part of the Jefferson County Agricultural Development Conference in 2022, Jefferson County Economic Development asked Dr. Todd M. Schmit to conduct an economic impact analysis of agriculture for Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego and

St. Lawrence Counties. Dr. Schmit is a professor of economics at the Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management at Cornell University. Through Dr. Schmit's work, we learned at the conference that in 2019, **agriculture contributed \$1.5 billion in total industry output, 6.6 thousand jobs, and \$344 million in gross domestic product** to the 4-county economy. Dr. Schmit indicated that when you look at backward linked supply chain and business to business transactions and household spending out of labor income, **the economic impact of agriculture grows to \$1.7 billion.**

**Food Processor and Agricultural Business Attraction.** JCED is constantly working to attract new agriculturally based business and food processing companies. In 2022, we were able to assist CWT Farms with their effort to build a new, high technology \$16 million egg hatchery in the Thousand Islands International Agriculture and Business Park in the Town of Watertown. The hatchery will produce 60 million chicks a year and create 20 new full-time jobs.

JCED also worked with our County and Regional economic development team to create our Dairy Manufacturing Initiative which proactively put together a "prospectus" to provide to any potential dairy manufacturer looking for a site for a new facility in the northeastern United States. The prospectus provides critical information on potential sites, available infrastructure and financial assistance. The Dairy Manufacturing Initiative allows us to move quickly and have all the information a dairy manufacturer will need in selecting potential sites to consider.

**Jay Matteson's Rural America Podcast.** Early in 2022, it was decided to end the radio show our Agricultural Coordinator, Jay Matteson, had hosted for over 20 years. In place of the radio show, JCED started a podcast to continue to provide information and insight about issues impacting agriculture and rural America. The podcast is hosted by Jay Matteson with help from dairy farmer Ron Robbins and former radio personality Alan Walts. The podcast is available via most major podcast hosting sites and can be found on its own Facebook page.