


# Spring 2007 *Council Gram*

Economic Development Council for the Southwest Suburbs: A Resource of  **Moraine Valley  
Community College**



Anthony Denovellis

As president of the Economic Development Council for the Southwest Suburbs, I am proud of the direction we are heading this year, and the goals we have set for 2007.

Many plans are being made to move us forward as we continue to work with community leaders, chambers of commerce, municipalities, regional groups, and businesses located in the Moraine Valley Community College district.

Our advisory board is now complete with representatives from each sector of the business community. This year, we have hosted symposiums on topics that affect business. Our first symposium discussed strategic healthcare funding options for business; the second covered Homeland Security and market development; and most recently, the topic was how to grow your business by knowing your target and prospect market.

In March, we participated in a regional networking event with local chambers of commerce at the Hilton Oak Lawn.

April was a busy month. EDCSS hosted a "Cash Flow is King" symposium that helped businesses learn to maximize profitability by controlling cash flow. We also held our annual spring breakfast. Our guest speaker, Phil Immordino, presented "9 Holes to Business success" that covered how to improve sales from the first meeting to the contract.

Save the date for our annual Business Awards Banquet which will be held on Nov. 1, and join our chamber partners for a regional networking event, B2B, on Sept. 18. We encourage all businesses to let us know what your needs are so we can help train you and help you succeed.

**Anthony Denovellis**, *EDCSS president*

For more information, visit our Web site [morainevalley.edu/edcss](http://morainevalley.edu/edcss), or contact Eda Schrimple at (708) 974-5714 or [schrimplee@morainevalley.edu](mailto:schrimplee@morainevalley.edu).

## **Moraine Valley Offers New TDL Certificate**

Recently, Moraine Valley's Workforce Development and Community Services (WDGS) received approval from the Illinois Community College Board to offer a 17-credit hour Supply Chain Management Certificate. Supply Chain Management encompasses the planning and management of all activities involved in sourcing and procurement, conversion, and logistics management activities. It comprises the transportation, distribution, warehousing and logistics (TDL) industry ensuring that goods and services from raw materials to finished goods are housed, stored and/or delivered to every sector of the economy.

The TDL professional is in great demand. This career has been cited as one of the world's fastest-growing careers. Since Moraine Valley lies in a transportation, distribution and logistics hub, and is vital to the economic well-being of the region, our TDL advisory board created this much-needed certificate program. The TDL advisory board consists of representatives from FedEx, UPS, the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals, CSX Transportation, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Yellow Transportation, Corn Products International, Alliance 3PL Corporation, James Street Associates, and the Center for Neighborhood Technology.

The curriculum includes the following courses:

- TDL-101 Transportation, Distribution and Logistics Overview
- TDL-102 Job Skills for Competitive Advantage
- TDL-103 Transportation
- TDL-104 Introduction to Import/Export
- TDL-105 Principles of Operations Management
- TDL-106 Cargo Security

The program is under the direction of Maria A. McIntyre (former executive director of the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals) and Mary Ann Cook. Both can be contacted at **(708) 974-5735**.

WDGS and its essential advisory boards are constantly working to increase the education and training level of our workforce. This leads to job creation and retention and enhances the economic well-being of our region. Together, we are making a difference. Therefore, I look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events and/or serving on one of our advisory boards.

On a personal note, thank you all for your love and support during this difficult time for me.

Regards,

**Mike Colky**, *dean, Workforce Development and Community Services*

## Lean Manufacturing Requires a Cultural Change

Are you considering initiating or reinitiating the implementation of Lean Manufacturing or other continuous improvement philosophies in your business? Polyurethane manufacturer, Kastalon, Inc. introduced this type of program 10 years ago, and focused on a change in the company's culture before incorporating the technical tools.

Before any major implementation, you must consider that you are not only starting a program but integrating a new philosophy into your business. This philosophical change includes both behavioral and technical changes. Lean manufacturing addresses the behavioral change, while the Lean building blocks represent the technical change.

Employees in a manufacturing environment are generally process-oriented so they understand Lean building blocks. However, they may have trouble adapting to the empowerment given to the front-line level because they are used to being told what to do. Introducing a cultural change that encourages workers to think independently before implementing Lean building blocks increases the likelihood of a successful program.

The top leader in your organization must lead this behavioral change and demonstrate a commitment to valuing workers for their brains as well as their backs. Without this cultural change, your implementation of Lean manufacturing will likely fail.

Bruce DeMent, president of Kastalon, Inc. understood this concept and decided to initiate a behavioral change before bringing in the technical phase. Are you ready to show this same commitment? If you are, you're ready to begin your Lean journey.

**David Sander**, *plant manager*  
Kastalon, Inc.

## So You Have A Web Site...Now What?

One of the most common questions our clients ask is "How do people find my Web site once it's posted?" To get your site noticed, you must proactively market yourself. Here are some promotional ideas to implement immediately. "Shameless self-promotion" is your goal.

Promote your URL (Web address) prominently on your business cards, letterhead, press releases, giveaways, e-mail signatures, etc.

Make sure all employees know your Web site address. It is frustrating for a person to ask the receptionist for the company's Web site and get a response like, "It's bob@aol.com." Be sure your staff knows the difference between an e-mail address and a Web site address. Also, be sure your e-mail address is connected to your domain name. Don't use "bob@aol.com" — use "bob@buildchicagoland.com." Promote your Web site by using your e-mail.

Offer a "netletter" to existing and potential clients. Write a newsletter offering your expertise and e-mail it to those who request it, or produce it quarterly for all your customers. Use the "netletter" to advertise your products, specials, and provide general Web promotion to drive people to your site.

If you've just created a new Web site or updated an existing site, send a postcard to your clients. This correspondence works especially well for service providers that offer streamlined online processes. For example, BlueCross BlueShield of Illinois allows members to view their prescription history and claims, and sends an e-mail when a claim has been

finalized. The more user-friendly your site is, the more people will promote it for you.

Visit sites that complement or are similar to yours in some way, and offer to exchange links or banners. While the effectiveness of banner ads is controversial, you may find giving your Web users information and content they find relevant will help you through the reciprocity of your banner ad partners. The goal in providing links is two-fold: your client can click to other sites that may be relevant for them; and there are theories that search engines rank your site based on how many other sites are linked to your site.

Don't be afraid to think creatively to get your URL in front of your customers. There's a business owner at my local gym who wears his company T-shirt, which has the URL on the back, when he works out. Landscaping companies leave signs in their clients' lawns advertising their Web address. And I recently followed a car that had the dealer's URL around the license plate holder. Ask yourself, "How can I let people know about my site?"

For more ideas, visit [www.inertiagroup.com](http://www.inertiagroup.com) or call (815) 806-8005.

**Maribeth Hearn**, *co-founder*

The Inertia Group, Inc.—a full service Web design and consulting agency

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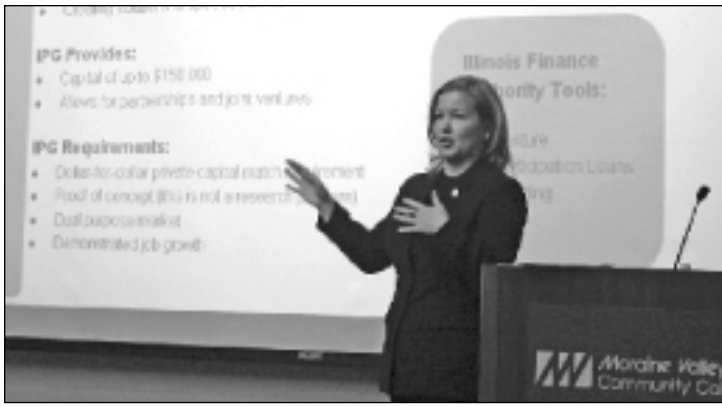
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For more information on becoming an EDCSS sponsor, contact Eda Schrimple at (708) 974-5714 or [schrimple@morainevalley.edu](mailto:schrimple@morainevalley.edu) or visit our Web site at [morainevalley.edu/edcss](http://morainevalley.edu/edcss).

**Nominate a business for our annual Business Awards Banquet  
and save the date—Nov. 1, 2007.**



*Brenda Sherwood discusses a new Homeland Security Market Development grant.*

## Financial Incentives for Business

On Feb. 8, **Brenda Sherwood**, coordinator of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunities' Homeland Security Market Development Bureau, presented an EDCSS symposium to inform the business community about funding opportunities available through the Homeland Security Market Development Innovative Product Grant (IPG) program. The IPG provides funding for innovative homeland security products and services that can be developed, produced, commercialized or delivered from Illinois.

This program was created by the state of Illinois to attract, support and engage businesses in the homeland security industry with the goals of:

- Generating job growth by accelerating production and improvement of "ready to go" homeland security products and services
- Leveraging investment in new homeland security technologies
- Creating solutions to specific homeland security needs and challenges

For more information about this program and how to apply for IPG funds, visit <http://hsmd.illinois.gov/hs/>.

## Conference for Elected Officials to be Held at Moraine Valley

On June 1 and 2, the EDCSS, in partnership with the Southwest Conference of Mayors, is hosting an Illinois Municipal League conference for newly elected officials following the municipal elections in April. This year's conference topics include:

- Duties of officials
- Fundamental procedures of city and village governments
- Laws and regulations affecting municipalities

While the conference is designed primarily for new officials, it can serve as a refresher course for veteran officials. Special break-out sessions will be conducted for municipal clerks and treasurers.

The conference will be held at Moraine Valley Community College, College Center, second floor, 9000 W. College Parkway, Palos Hills. For more information, contact Eda Schrimple, EDCSS coordinator at **(708) 974-5714**, or Gary Koch, Illinois Municipal League at **(217) 525-1220**, or visit [www.iml.org](http://www.iml.org).

## Small Business Development Program: Workshops on Critical Business Topics for Beginning and Experienced Entrepreneurs

Here's a sampling of the workshops and programs offered by Moraine Valley's Small Business Development Program. We also provide customized business solutions to fit your specific needs.

### Business Basics for Entrepreneurs

This six-course program covers all facets of small business ownership. Learn the fundamentals to successfully start, manage or expand a business. Includes starting a business, accounting and bookkeeping, financial management, marketing, legal issues, and how to write a business plan.

### QuickBooks Concepts

Learn the fundamentals of using QuickBooks to effectively maintain your accounting records. Topics include getting started, working with customer, vendor and employee lists, establishing bank accounts, creating a chart of accounts and tracking credit card transactions.

### QuickBooks Functionality

Expand your QuickBooks knowledge in this hands-on workshop. Learn how to receive payments, make deposits, enter and pay bills, and analyze financial data.

### QuickBooks Payroll

Learn how to use the payroll feature of QuickBooks. Covers setting up employees, generating payroll, paying payroll liabilities, and avoiding the 15 biggest payroll mistakes.

### QuickBooks Simple Start

Learn the fundamentals of using the new QuickBooks product Simple Start for complete and accurate records with essential reports in this hands-on class.

### Marketing on a Shoestring

Learn how to find and attract customers using minimal resources. Covers low-cost market research methods, advertising media, and measuring results.

### Effective Sales Techniques to Increase Revenue

Learn effective techniques to increase your sales with existing customers and attract new customers.

### Make Your Web Site Work for You

Develop a Web site to effectively market your organization. Learn strategies to promote your products or services and implement an e-commerce strategy. This is not a class on building a Web site.

### Look for new topics offered this fall including:

- How to Recruit the Right Staff for Your Organization
- Selling Through a Distributor
- Sales Management
- International Selling
- Sales Improvement While Maintaining your Margin
- Understanding the Cost of Doing Business

For more information, call Aurora Zwick at **(708) 974-5741** or e-mail [zwick@morainevalley.edu](mailto:zwick@morainevalley.edu).



## Economic Development Council for the Southwest Suburbs

**ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
COUNCIL**  
FOR THE SOUTHWEST SUBURBS

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A Resource of  **Moraine Valley  
Community College**

**Upcoming Events**



**EDCSS Business Awards Banquet**  
Nov. 1, 2007  
*Nominate a business!*

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Joseph Valenti, MB Financial Bank

Gary Wesner, Great Lakes Bank

Do you have a business success story you'd like to share? We're interested in highlighting successful businesses in our area. If you know of a business with a unique story – yours or someone else's – please contact Eda Schrimple at **(708) 974-5714** or [schrimplee@morainevalley.edu](mailto:schrimplee@morainevalley.edu).