

people who have not worked around automotive, but we have people in this part of the country that have extremely strong work ethics."

Aerospace also accounts for the economy's anticipated takeoff. Robert Baugniet, director of corporate communications for Gulfstream Aerospace, a wholly owned subsidiary of General Dynamics, says the area "is an excellent transportation hub, has an excellent work force and available land at the airport, as well as an ongoing relationship with the Savannah College of Art and Design and Savannah Tech," he says. "When we opened in 1967, we had 100 employees and today have 6,000 people working for us," he says.

As part of Gulfstream's long-range facilities master plan, a \$400 million, seven-year phased expansion that is expected to create up to 1,100 new jobs, the company is building a new Savannah Service and Support Center that is more than double the size of its current facility to meet the ongoing demand for business-jet aircraft support, maintenance, and refurbishment. The building project is slated for completion at the end of this year.

A strong anticipated recovery — including 10,000 new jobs in the in the Columbus area — is attributed to activities at Fort Benning. While the 2005 BRAC closures caused woes in other areas, Georgia benefited from the plans to move the U.S. Army Armor School to Fort Benning, where it will be

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combined with the Army's Infantry School. The project is moving steadily toward its federally mandated September 2011 completion date. Gary Jones, executive vice president of military affairs for the Valley Partnership, says that \$1 billion in construction is currently taking place at Fort Benning and by late summer, an additional \$800 million in new construction will begin. •

## REPORT FROM

# INDIANA

By Cynthia Kincaid

## GROWTH INDUSTRIES HELP POWER STATE THROUGH RECESSION-RELATED CHALLENGES



**T**here's something in the wind in Indiana — alternative energy investment. The Indiana Office of Energy Development (OED) is actively recruiting new, high-tech companies to the state, underscoring a serious commitment to wind energy development and components manufacturing. "We've just started tapping into Indiana's wind resource," says

Brandon Seitz, OED's director. "Indiana's location and manufacturing infrastructure also makes it perfect to help meet this

industry's growing supply chain needs."

In its *Wind Power Outlook 2009* report, the American Wind Energy Association spotlighted Indiana as the fastest-growing state for wind energy installations in 2008 and projected an increase in installations to more than 800 megawatts by the end of this year. "Indiana has risen quickly as a national leader in wind energy development and is a natural location for future investment from the growing industry," says Mitch Roob, secretary of commerce and CEO of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation.

Indiana has been nicknamed the "Crossroads of America," because it has more intersecting interstate highways than any

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other state, along with three international airports, a robust rail system, and three marine ports on Lake Michigan and the Ohio River. At the same time, the state has invested heavily in information technology infrastructure, and its fiber optic network is among the best in the nation.

Sonco Worldwide, a manufacturer of chain-link and vinyl fencing and barricades has decided to take advantage of Indiana's strategic location and establish a manufacturing operation in Indiana, investing almost \$700,000 to site a new manufacturing and distribution center in an existing 20,000-square-foot facility. "We've seen a lot of growth in our Midwest business and Indianapolis is the perfect hub to service those emerging markets," says Bobby Long, president of Sonco Worldwide.

The downturn in the automotive industry and the recession in general have hurt the state's economy and created high unemployment in some regions, but some companies are looking at the challenges and opting to stay in Indiana and create new business models. A partnership between Electric Motors Corporation, a manufacturer of electric vehicles, and Gulf Stream Coach, a manufacturer of recreational vehicles and motor homes, will produce the first light-duty electric pickup truck made in the United States. The partners will invest more than \$80 million to site manufacturing facilities in Wakarusa and Nappanee, potentially creating more than 1,600 jobs by 2012. "Our participation in this effort should be a large component in accomplishing the task of Indiana becoming one of the EV capitals of the world," says Wil Cashen, CEO of Electric Motors. •

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