

CONNECTICUT

By Cynthia Kincaid

INCENTIVES AND PARTNERSHIPS ATTRACT MULTIPLE INDUSTRY SECTORS



Connecticut's homegrown advantages and proximity to major U.S. markets and resources gives it a distinct advantage for manufacturing growth and development. It is the first state to formally implement an economic development strategy based on the industry cluster philosophy of developing work force and training opportunities and implementing lean technologies, public policymaking, and marketing. Thus it is strongly poised to take advantage of the recent federal stimulus funds, which is exactly what state officials are doing. In fact, Connecticut has applied for \$2.3 million in federal stimulus money to be earmarked towards various statewide projects, especially to rehabilitate brownfields. The money will also be used to attract new business, while retaining its many current employers.

The state is also beefing up its distribution sector with the addition of Walgreen Company's newest distribution center in Windsor. Thirty percent of the work force at the center will be made up of people with disabilities, who will work side-by-side with other team members. They will be accountable for the same productivity goals and will earn the same pay. "We've worked technology and creativity into every inch of this place, but the people here will amaze you," says Randy Lewis, Walgreens' senior vice president of supply chain and logistics. "We originally went into this project wanting to change the work environment, but soon discovered we were the ones who changed in dramatic and wonderful ways."

The 700,000-square-foot facility will support hundreds of Walgreens stores throughout the Northeast. Efficiency for the facility is expected to be more than 20 percent because of the incorporation of some of the most innovative logis-

tics systems within the distribution industry. Walgreens is the nation's largest drugstore chain, with more than 6,700 stores throughout the continental United States and Puerto Rico.

Connecticut also sustains an aerospace sector and recently loaned \$500,000 to aerospace and industrial components manufacturer, Jonal Laboratories Inc., to expand its Meriden facilities. Attracting high-tech manufacturers like Jonal will be critical in keeping Connecticut competitive, especially



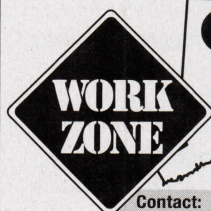
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during the economic recovery, and the state is keenly focused on wooing these companies.

Healthcare also plays an important economic role in the state. UnitedHealth Group recently voted in favor of staying in Connecticut by moving its Hartford offices to another office building in downtown Hartford, which created almost 200 new construction-related jobs. The company has approximately 4,300 employees and staff at various locations throughout Connecticut. As part of the state's commitment to healthcare in general and UnitedHealth Group specifically, the state's Department of Economic and Community Development will provide state funding of \$1.5 million towards the company's infrastructure improvements and energy efficiency projects in its new location. "Our decision to remain in Hartford reinforces the company's ongoing commitment to the region as both an employer and community partner," says company officer Mike Matteo.

Other companies making the move to Connecticut include Henkel North America, a marketer of a wide range of familiar household products such as Dial soaps and Right Guard antiperspirants, which is moving its corporate headquarters from Gulph Mills, Pennsylvania, to an existing facility in Rocky Hill, Connecticut, creating 80 new jobs in the process. The state has provided Henkel with more than \$800,000 in relocation assistance. In a statement welcoming the Henkel headquarters, Governor M. Jodi Rell summed up the state's message to businesses: "Connecticut is open for business. We will aggressively pursue partnership opportunities with companies that will create jobs, generate capital investment, and strengthen the local and regional economies." •

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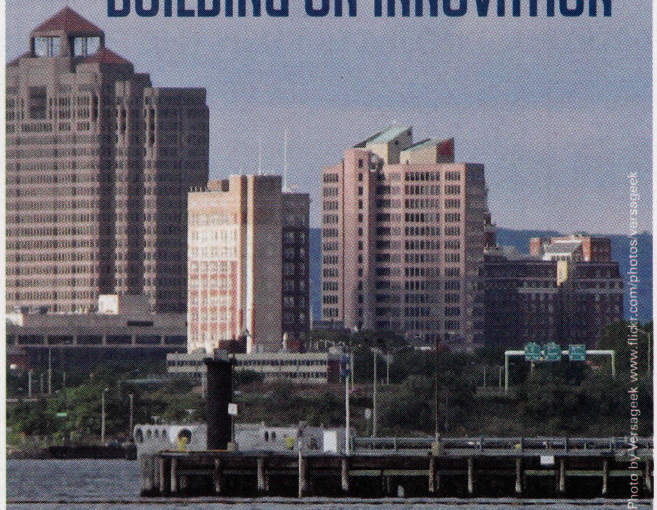


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