

## BRN PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

### A Proven Approach to Help Businesses Succeed and Grow

The Business Resource Network (BRN) uses a unique approach to help businesses succeed and grow. The BRN works closely with businesses to identify and access a host of business services with as little red tape as possible. The BRN currently operates in 16 counties in Ohio.

A collaboration of chambers of commerce, workforce and economic development organizations, universities, career & technical centers, state and local government agencies; the BRN partnership targets businesses with growth potential as well as those facing challenges. It then conducts in-depth interviews with the owners and managers of the businesses.

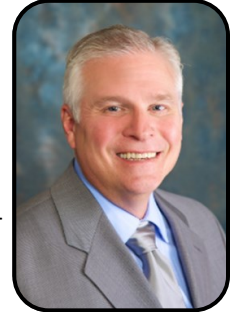
After learning a business's goals and the obstacles it may be facing, BRN Partners present the business with a package of suggested incentives, technical assistance, training and other programs designed specifically for that business.

This all happens through a single point of contact—the BRN Account Executive—assuring coordination of services and minimal bureaucracy. There is no charge for the interview and proposal and many services are available at no cost.

Once the business chooses the programs and services it wants to pursue, the BRN Account Executive continues to work with the business and participating BRN Partners over time to deliver quality services and identify new ways to assist the business.



### DAVID M. WHEELER General Manager Community Affairs



David Wheeler began his career with American Electric Power as a Marketing & Customer Services Advisor in Zanesville, Ohio in 1984. He has been promoted to a number of positions within the Marketing & Customer Services department over the course of his career with AEP. In 2000 he became a Community Affairs General Manager in Canton. His responsibilities include managing and directing AEP Ohio's Community Affairs department and he is Canton's primary community affairs contact.

Before joining AEP he worked as a Chief of Staff in the Ohio Senate for a senator from New Philadelphia, Ohio. Mr. Wheeler currently serves on the Harrison Community Hospital Board of Directors, Canton Tomorrow, Inc. Board, Tuscarawas County Community Improvement Corporation Board, Employment Source Boards for WIB Districts 6 and 16, Holmes County Economic Development Board, and the Wayne Economic Development Council. Wheeler is a graduate of Kent State University. He is a native of Scio, Ohio and currently resides in Jewett, Ohio, with his wife and high school sweetheart, Jayme. He has two married sons, Erik (Karen) and Brent (Kristi) and a grandson Brandon.

As a BRN partner, AEP provides generation, transmission and distribution of electrical energy throughout District 16. Energy Efficiency consulting, Economic Development consulting and electrical facility design, construction services and energy management services.

Due to collaborative efforts between The BRN and AEP, Area 16 businesses have been provided leveraged resources totaling over \$45,700 in energy efficiencies and improvements.

### Lolly Ravak

OMEGA Revolving Loan Fund Administrator



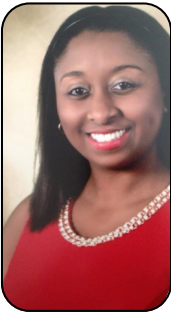
### THE RLF AND THE FINANCING PUZZLE

In today's economy, the OMEGA Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program can provide the 'missing piece' of the financing puzzle necessary for businesses to pursue their goals.

Established in 1992, the OMEGA RLF program offers fixed, low-interest rate loans to private-for-profit businesses in conjunction with bank financing. By providing a portion of the financing, the RLF encourages banks to participate in business ventures by reducing the bank's exposure and allowing them a first position on collateral. As a result, the RLF program provides the missing piece thereby completing the financing puzzle and allowing businesses to startup or expand.

For more information on the OMEGA RLF and eligibility, please contact Lolly Ravak at 800-726-6342 or 740-439-4471 ext. 203.

**MEET THE TEAM**



Born and raised in Jamaica, **Giselle Wells** is a recently separated Air Force veteran from Clovis, NM. While enlisted, she obtained her Associates in Applied Science majoring in Construction Technology. She is currently pursuing her Bachelors of Science in Applied Management at Ohio University Eastern Campus. Wells has worked for both private and public sectors in several states such as Florida, Mississippi, New Mexico and also her hometown St. Andrew, Jamaica. Her professional experience entails housing management, customer service, welding and sheet metal fabrication, residential and commercial construction, and office automation. She actively served as an interim Vice President for the Civil Engineering Activities Council at Cannon Air Force Base, NM, engaging the community and its leaders thus increasing awareness for all stakeholders. She is new to the Ohio Valley and both her and her husband reside in Belmont County.



**Becky Panebianco** is a lifelong resident of the Steubenville/Wintersville area and a graduate of Jefferson Technical College with a major in Business Administration and a minor in Data Processing.

Prior to joining the BRN team, she has worked in the private sector managing all aspects of a business office including Accounting, Purchasing, Pricing/Costing, Logistics, Inventory Control, Office Management, A/P, A/R, Payroll, Reconciliations and Customer Service.

Becky states that the BRN's services and partner connections are a valuable asset to the community. She is dedicated to assisting our region's businesses succeed, grow and positively affect the economic development and diversification in our area.

**CONTACTING THE BRN  
AREA 16**

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**BRN Area 16 Partners**

American Electric Power  
 Belmont College  
 Buckeye Career Center  
 Carroll County Chamber of Commerce  
 Frontier Communications  
 Jefferson Cty Community Action Council  
 Jefferson County Port Authority  
 Mahoning Valley Economic Development Corp.  
 Office of Congressman Bill Johnson  
 Office of Senator Portman  
 Ohio Means Jobs Harrison County  
 OMEGA  
 Village of Hopedale

AMVETS Post 275  
 Belmont County DJFS  
 Bureau of Workers' Compensation  
 Eastern Gateway Community College  
 Harrison County Commissioners  
 Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce  
 Kent State University-Tuscarawas/SBDC  
 Ohio Department of Job and Family Svcs  
 Office of Governor John Kasich  
 Ohio Means Jobs Belmont County  
 Ohio Means Jobs Jefferson County  
 SCORE

APEG  
 Belmont Harrison JVSD  
 Cadiz Community Improvement Corp.  
 Franciscan University of Steubenville  
 Harrison County DJFS  
 Jefferson County JVS  
 Minerva Area Chamber of Commerce  
 Ohio Department of Transportation  
 Office of Senator Lou Gentile  
 Ohio Means Jobs Carroll County  
 Ohio University PTAC  
 Stark State University