

# Inside the Network



## **A Proven Approach to Help Businesses Survive and Grow**

The Business Resource Network (BRN) uses a unique approach to help businesses survive 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, including Adams, Brown, Pike & Scioto Counties.

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 tight 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.

Visit the BRN on the web at  
**[www.thebrn.net](http://www.thebrn.net)**



Rural King, "America's Farm and Home Store", will open a new distribution center and store in Waverly, Ohio (Pike County); bringing up to 160 new jobs.

In October, 2014, Rural King CEO Alex Melvin announced the \$12.5 million investment in the Pike Industrial Park. "We're in a real growth stage right now...Our company is growing quickly." Melvin said, adding that Rural King wants to eventually maximize the warehouse space. According to Melvin, the location is ideal for growing their business and logistically made sense for Rural King.

The distribution center is expected to employ 120 people and serve 30 stores in the chain. Distribution operations are expected to open in Summer 2015. The new retail store is expected to open in March 2015 and will be located adjacent to the warehouse. The retail store will employ another 30-40 employees.

The BRN began working with Rural King in July 2014 by assisting their chain store in Circleville, Ohio. From that interview our BRN Account Executive, Polly Oliver, was able to assist them with job postings. After great success with that store a successful and trusting relationship was built with Rural King and The BRN. As Rural King disclosed their plans to grow in Pike County to The BRN, we were able to pass along their challenges and opportunities in Pike County to the network. BRN Partners Southern Ohio Port Authority and Pike County Economic Development worked together to present proposals to two (2) additional BRN Partners, Southern Ohio Diversification Initiative (SODI) and Joint Economic Development Initiative of Southern Ohio (JEDISO) for project funding. By working together they were able to secure a total of \$100,000 from SODI's Economic Development Fund and JEDISO's Fluor-BW Opportunity Fund.

BRN Partner OhioMeansJobs Pike County has been assisting the business for several months in finding qualified employees in its current retail store in Circleville and for the new retail store and distribution center in Waverly. They have held open interviews, post job openings on [ohiomeansjobs.com](http://ohiomeansjobs.com), and screen applications for the business. The BRN is proud of the work we are doing together to grow businesses in Southern Ohio, like Rural King.



Ohio Valley Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center (OVM) was awarded the Brown County Chamber of Commerce 2015 Peter F. Drucker Award of Distinction. This honor is presented annually to a Brown County business that has shown a history of business excellence and commitment to the principles of quality management as well as vision, leadership and innovation.

For over 40 years, OVM has provided care for countless local residents and its services have grown to encompass several physical and mental care needs. The facility currently supplies careers for over 250 healthcare professionals and para-professionals.

"We are a skilled nursing facility providing rehabilitation services as well as long-term care—we've been in business since 1971 and we've been locally owned for the duration of that time," said George Balz, Ohio Valley Manor Administrator. "Throughout the years we've expanded from a 50-bed facility to having a current capacity of around 170 beds, which included our assisted living. We also have our home health services now and we have outpatient rehabilitation."

The BRN would like to congratulate Ohio Valley Manor on receiving this honor and thank them for all their dedication to the Brown County families they serve and employ.

## Partner Spotlight

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced in February 2015, that rural agricultural producers and small business owners can now apply for resources to purchase and install renewable energy systems or make energy efficiency improvements. These efforts help farmers, ranchers and other small business owners save money on their energy bills, reduce America's dependence on foreign oil, support America's clean energy economy, and cut carbon pollution. The resources are made possible by the 2014 Farm Bill.



USDA is offering grants for up to 25 percent of total project costs and loan guarantees for up to 75 percent of total project costs for renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvements. USDA will now accept and review REAP loan and grant applications year-round.

Eligible renewable energy projects must incorporate commercially available technology. This technology includes renewable energy from wind, solar, ocean, small hydropower, hydrogen, geothermal and renewable biomass (including anaerobic digesters). The maximum grant amount is \$500,000, and the maximum loan amount is \$25 million per applicant.

Energy efficiency improvement projects eligible for REAP funding include lighting, heating, cooling, ventilation, fans, automated controls and insulation upgrades that reduce energy consumption. The maximum grant amount is \$250,000, and the maximum loan amount is \$25 million per applicant.

USDA is making more than \$280 million available to eligible applicants through the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). Application deadlines vary by project type and the type of assistance requested. Details on how to apply are available by contacting state Rural Development offices or BRN Partner Randy Monhemius at (614) 255-2424 or randy.monhemius@oh.usda.gov.

### **Vision Statement: Enrich Communities by Building Stronger Businesses.**

The Adams County Public Library serves as the community information resource for Adams County. Library branches are located in West Union, Peebles, Manchester, and Seaman, and a Library Outreach van makes deliveries to seniors and schools every week. Adams County voters approved a library levy in 2012, which enabled the library to restore weekly hours to six days each week, including four weeknight evenings until 7:00 p.m.



Patrons enjoy access to over 2 million books and movies shared from libraries around Ohio, thanks to a statewide consortium. Public computers with Microsoft Office software, free wireless Internet, and one-on-one technology training make the library a popular destination for homework, entertainment, and e-government access. Libraries also offer equipment to print, copy, scan, and fax. Library resources available online include access to subscription databases Ancestry.com, Chilton Auto Repair Manuals, test preparation resource Learning Express, and Heritage Quest. Library card holders can download eBooks and audiobooks from the Ohio Digital Library. A grant awarded by the State Library of Ohio enables the library to host an AmeriCorps member, who offers free computer training to anyone in the community.

Access library resources from anywhere, and view a calendar of upcoming events at the library's website, adamscolibrary.org. The dedicated staff is ready to answer questions, help with technology tasks, and ensure each library visitor finds the information they need.

### BRN Partners

- Adams Co. Chamber of Commerce
- Adams Co. Economic & Community Development
- Adams Co. Commissioners
- Adams Co. Dept. of Job & Family Services
- Adams Brown Co. Economic Opportunities, Inc.
- AEP Ohio
- Adams Brown Co. Economic Opportunities.-Business Dev.
- Adams Co. Public Library
- Brown Co. Chamber of Commerce
- Brown Co. Commissioners
- Brown Co. Economic Development
- Bureau of Workers Compensation
- Community Action Committee (CAC) of Pike County
- CAC of Pike Co.-Business Development
- CAC of Pike Co.-Family Health Center
- Community Action Organization of Scioto Co., Inc.
- City of Portsmouth
- Disability Employment Initiative
- Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Services/Region 4
- Joint Economic Development Initiative
- Pike Co. Career Technical Center/ABLE
- Pike Co. Economic Development
- Pike Co. General Health District
- Pike Co. Dept. of Job & Family Services
- Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce
- Scioto Co. ABLE
- Scioto Co. Career Technical Center
- Shawnee State University
- Southern Hills Career Technical Center
- Southern Ohio Diversification Initiative (SODI)
- Southern Ohio Port Authority
- Southern Ohio Procurement Outreach Center
- Southern State Community College
- U.S.D.A./Rural Development
- Southern State Community College/Enterprise Center
- The OSU South Centers/Business Programs
- U.S. Dept. of Veteran Affairs
- Village of Georgetown
- Village of New Boston
- Village of Peebles
- Village of Seaman
- Village of West Union
- Workforce Development Area 1/Ohio Means Jobs of Adams, Brown, Pike & Scioto Counties