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Executive Director

**OED advances the business prosperity of Ozaukee County collaborating with community, regional and business partners ensuring a growing and diversified economy.**

## Innovation and Determination Is The Ozaukee Way

Since March of this year, businesses, schools, and various organizations have faced daunting challenges as we all learn to navigate through these unprecedented times. Recently though as I visited with guests at our OED Outreach Event, I heard firsthand from many how the businesses and people of Ozaukee are showing how innovative and determined they are to succeed and serve our good citizens.

Our Outreach Event, which was held on August 26th in and of itself showed what a little innovation and determination can achieve. In the past, this has always been held in the spring and attended by over 300 people. Clearly, this spring that was not going to happen. But instead of canceling the event, like so many others were doing, the OED Board determined to attempt to hold something that might look different than years past but still was indeed an OUTREACH event. After all, our name implies business development and while life in many ways has become virtual there still is a place for in-person socialization, networking, and support.

There were plans of course for risk mitigation and a little over two weeks out from the event we had been promoting for months our featured guest had to cancel. Yet as a Board, OED was determined to provide an opportunity for folks to safely gather. What a breath of fresh air, literally, as our guests shared stories of how they were innovating, reimagining, and persevering in their own businesses and organizations, YES that is the Ozaukee County Way.

So a special thanks to all those who attended our event, Kathleen Cady Schilling for her steadfast leadership, Lorli Woitas, and the OED Board for persevering. A huge thank you to Tim Sheehy, President of the MMAC. Within five minutes of receiving our request to be our new featured speaker, he responded he would be happy to do so, whew, crisis averted! For anyone who has experienced Tim's incredible leadership his message was fantastic and insightful.

And finally a thank you to a local business showing innovation and determination, Shully's Cuisine and Events, our hosts on this warm summer day. The catering and event business has been rocked by this pandemic, but there was a smiling Scott and Beth Shully and their family hosting the event. Instead of lamenting their plight they "Pivoted" (There's that word). Anyone who has been there these past few months has seen how they transformed themselves from not just a catering and event business but also into a destination with Shully's Biergarten featuring live music, food and fun. Who knew Scott could pull off Lederhosen!

So thank you Ozaukee County for staying strong. Keep supporting our local businesses who do such a tremendous job of making our lives better and more fulfilling. Yes indeed, Innovation and Determination is the Ozaukee County Way!

*Dean*

*Dean Renniecke, President, Ozaukee Economic Development*

# 2020 OED Outreach Event Recap

## *A socially-distanced success*

2020 has been a unique time for the world. We have dealt with social changes and a pandemic unlike anything we have ever dealt with. OED has been evaluating the situation and determining when would be the right time to hold its 2020 Outreach Event. After two postponements, OED was excited to finally host our event on Wednesday, August 26th. The event was held at Shully's in Thiensville. However, instead of utilizing the Watermark building, we took the event outside.

Utilizing the outdoor spaces and through appropriate social distancing, OED was happy to have a very successful event. Due to the COVID situation, OED limited attendance to 100 attendees, but all the crowd was happy to be together in person and to get a chance to network. The event was presented by Ascension-Columbia St. Mary's and We Energies.

The event began with time for attendees to reconnect. Attendees enjoyed a drink and some of Shully's excellent food before the program started.

The program then began with a welcome from our President, Dean Rennicke. Dean talked about the challenges that we all had been facing in 2020; zoom meetings (don't forget to unmute), businesses looking how to pivot and employees working remotely. However, he also highlighted that with us all working together as a community, even through these challenging times, we will become stronger.

Kathleen Cady Schilling, Executive Director of OED, then spoke of OED's efforts over the past year, highlighting new loan programs developed by the City of Mequon and Village of Grafton to assist businesses dealing with the aftereffects of the State shutdown, to OED's efforts on the We Are All In Grant, which brought in 1.125 Million dollars into the county. Mr. Tom Metcalfe, President of We Energies and the Wisconsin Public Service, spoke of how his company dealt with the issues related to COVID, including remote work and changes in power usage. He then introduced Tim Sheehy, President of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, our featured speaker.

Mr. Sheehy spoke about the current events facing our region. He noted that he had a meeting of MMAC members in early 2020 and they had



already begun the discussions of the concerns facing the economy. Many of those members have locations globally and were already concerned in January and February. He then spoke of how those businesses were altering their operations. This early information helped MMAC pivot when the virus

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# Scenes from the 2020 Outreach Event





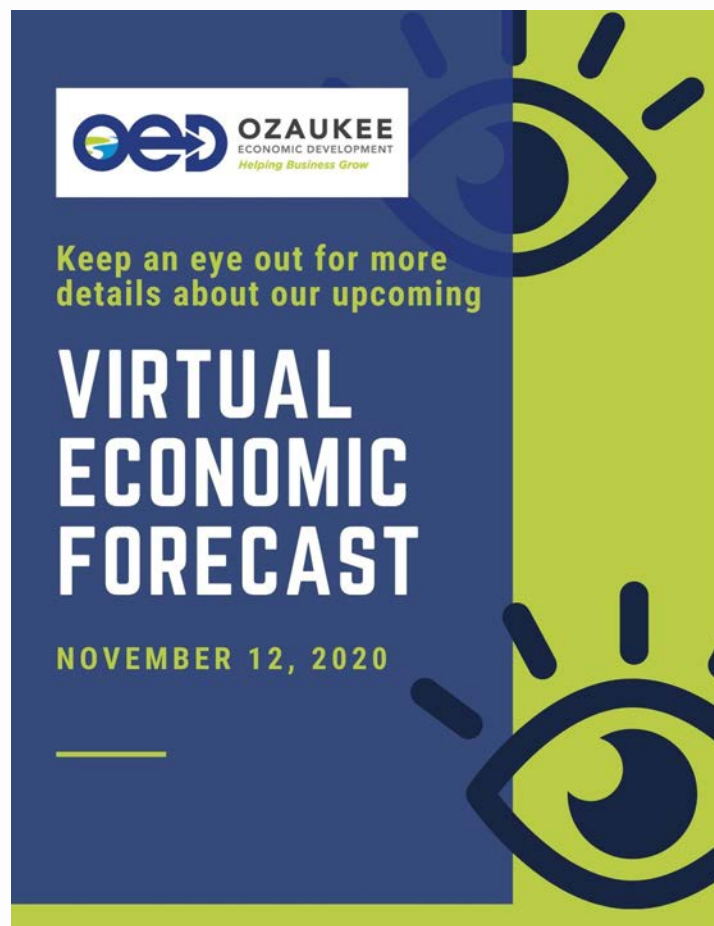
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began to affect Milwaukee and the State shut down most business operations in March.

MMAC began to create new programs virtually for businesses to help them adapt and survive. Additionally, beyond the COVID pandemic, the region has also been affected by the social disruptions occurring regarding race. Mr. Sheehy explained that how our region responds to these issues will affect whether the Milwaukee region rises as a potential option for businesses and remote workers or if we fall.

Lastly, Mr. Sheehy stated that he felt one of the biggest challenges facing us as we move forward is the education of our youth. Ensuring that all youth in the Milwaukee area are prepared for the future will be key to our success.

Ozaukee Economic Development was delighted to have Mr. Sheehy as our featured speaker for our 13th Annual Outreach Event. We would also like to thank Shully's for the amazing job they did at the event and our Sponsors, Presenting Sponsors, Ascension- Columbia St. Mary's and We Energies; Gold Sponsors, Ansay & Associates/Ansay Development, Associated Bank, Aurora Health Care, Better Business Bureau Serving WI, Concordia University, Froedtert Health & the Medical College of WI, Mequon-Thiensville School District, Port Washington State Bank, Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren, SEEK Careers/Staffing, Stifel Investment Services and von Briesen & Roper; Silver Sponsors; Bank Five Nine, CLA, Commerce State Bank, Doig Corporation, Gener8tor, Grafton Area Chamber of Commerce, Kohler Credit Union, Levy and Levy, MATC-Mequon, Pyramax Bank, RBC Wealth Management, Richmond Investment Services, Sommer's Automotive, Spectrum Investment Advisors, the Sommersberger Group at Baird, US Bank and Vertz Markeing. We hope you can join us for next year's event.



### **A Quick Note on OED Office Hours:**

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, much like many of you, the OED staff have been working in the office along with a combination of days remotely from home. We are very happy to meet with you, but please first contact us to set up an appointment. You can do that by emailing [kschilling@co.ozaukee.wi.us](mailto:kschilling@co.ozaukee.wi.us) or call us at 262-238-7730.

