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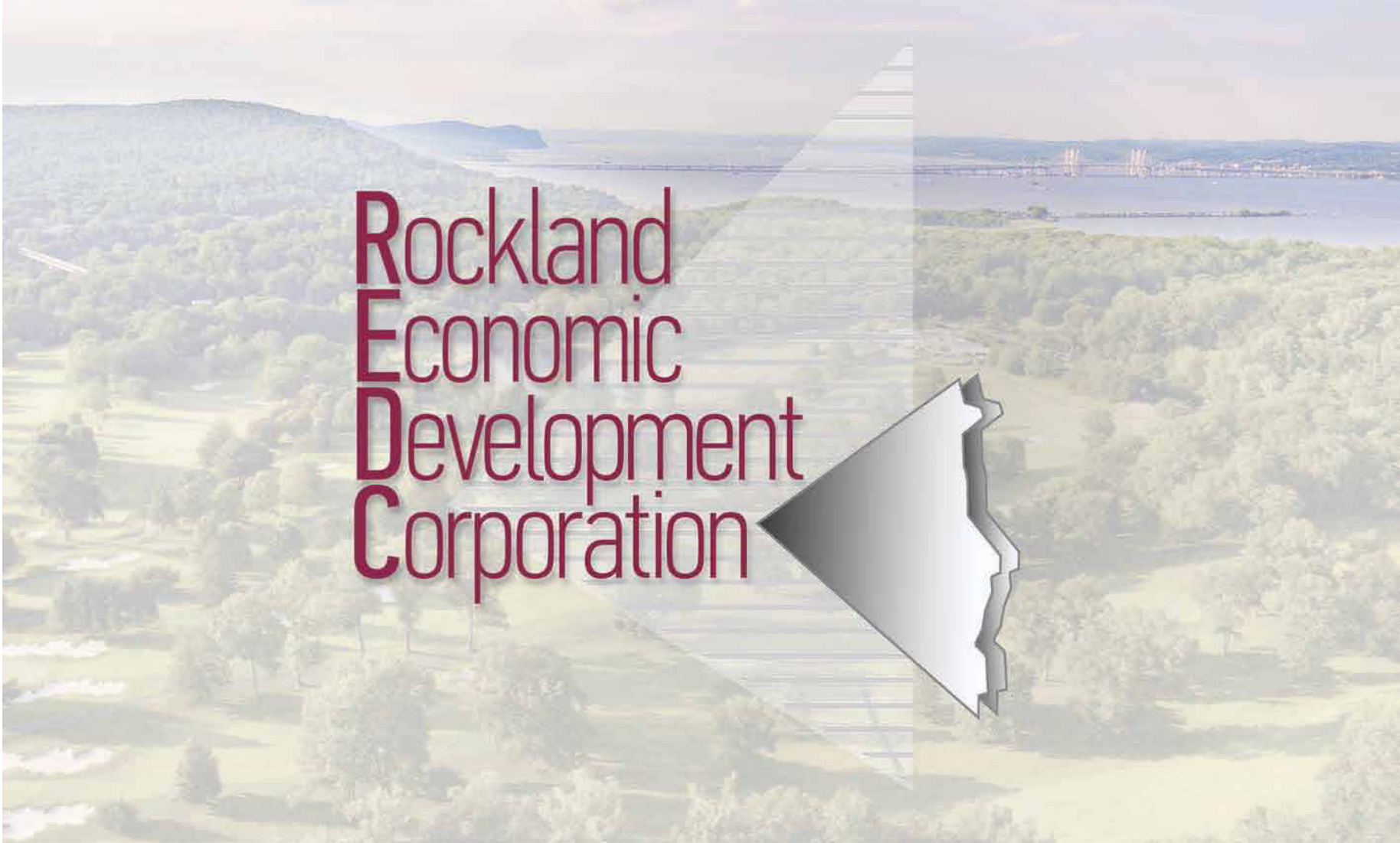
# REAL ESTATE IN-DEPTH

Official Publication of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors

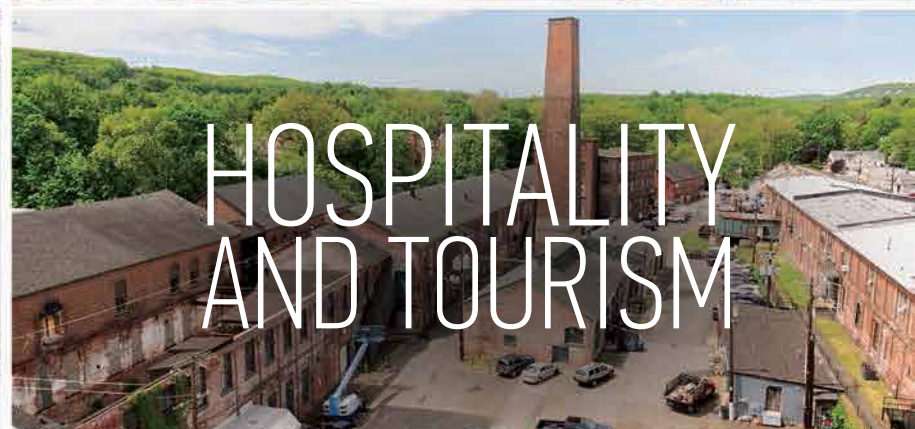


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# A Conversation with County Executive Ed Day After Bringing County Back From Financial Brink Day Looks to Advance Key Policies in Second Term

By John Jordan

NEW CITY—The chief focus of Rockland County Executive Ed Day's first four years in office was to implement govern-



mental and budgetary reform to improve county government operations and put the days when county government was on the brink of default in the rear-view mirror.

Day recalled that in the first days of his administration in January 2014 he learned that the county was just \$42,000 from defaulting on its \$138-million debt.

Since that time, Day and his administration have succeeded in bringing reform to county government operations and arranging a critical \$96-million bond financing deal that has helped put Rockland back on much firmer financial footing.

Day, who easily won re-election in November, announced recently that

an audit projects the county's deficit is anticipated to reach zero by the end of Fiscal 2017.

In an exclusive interview at his offices in the County Office Building in New City, Day looked back at how the county turned its finances around, his other key policies in his first term and what initiatives he hopes to put into effect in his next four years as the county's chief executive.

**Q:** While Rockland County has come a long way since the early days of your administration when county government



teetered with default, the county recently reached a milestone in turning its finances around. Can you explain what this milestone means and what measures need to be employed to prevent such an issue from happening again?

**Day:** The milestone we achieved frankly shocked me. I don't think anyone could have predicted the success that we have had in addressing the deficit.

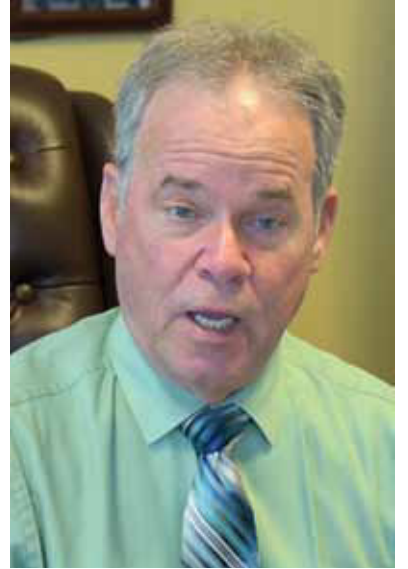
The deficit is projected to be zero in 2017—\$138 million basically restructured or paid back. What's left, the bond we sold, we're paying that back within the



property tax cap. If you recall back in 2014 there was a presumption we would have to have a 10-year fee or surcharge to pay that back—the equivalent of a about a 12% property tax increase on county taxes. We did it as part of the budget and that I really believe was miraculous. I give credit to some very simple, straight-forward things: we have some very talented people who came into government, there are very talented people we found in county government, we have used one word very often and that word is 'No,' and we have expectations over our managers and commissioners and they have performed admirably. Even to this day when I look at the last budget runs we have done... we are below budget. Essentially we have taken an

organization that was in free-fall, we have implemented common-sense strategies that frankly any good organization would have implemented. I have been blessed to have the strong backing of the people to do it and at the end of the day we were near broke. There was nearly no place to go except over the cliff. And as most do know—\$42,000 in the bank when we made payroll the third week of January 2014. That's where we started.

The measures (to prevent another



fiscal crisis) are the measures we have employed already. This is not magic sauce. What we are doing is we are having expectations of (county department) management, insisting on customer service, we don't spend money we don't have, we project conservatively and we have done that every year. That is one of the reasons why the deficit is down

Continued on page 18

## Rockland Housing Market Posts Strong Results in 2017; Tax Reform, Rates Are Areas of Concern in Coming Year



By Jennifer Mallory

Predicting the real estate market is about as easy as timing the stock market, due to the complex interplay of forces that create the market. Four basic numbers tend to drive real estate—home sales, home prices, months supply of inventory and mortgage rates. The economy, encompassing inflation and unemployment, as well as policy decisions on local, state and national levels also affect the local market.

In 2017, each of these forces contributed to create a strong housing market in Rockland County, a trend that looks to continue in 2018, although the tax reform bill being debated at the time of this writing could have serious ramifications on the housing market.

### Rockland County Housing Market

Third Quarter 2017

Total # of Home Sales —	+7.9%
Home Inventory —	-15.1%
Median Single-Family Home Price —	\$445,000

Source: Hudson Gateway Multiple Listing Service, Inc.

For the year, both pending sales and closed sales are up, according to statistics from the Hudson Gateway Multiple Listing Service, Inc. Since January 2017, pending sales have increased 4.8% for single-family homes, and closed sales have increased 8.6% for the same group. However, the number of new listings trended down most of the year, showing a 1.4% decrease from January 2017 to November 2017. Buyers reacted quickly, recognizing the competition for the best listings, leading days on market to decrease by 14.1% since the beginning of the year.

This downward trend in the number of new listings has caused an increase in sale price for Rockland County. For single-family homes, the median price rose 3.8% for the year, from \$425,000 in January to \$439,000 in December.

Months supply of inventory measures the number of months it would take for all current inventory to sell, if no new listings came on the market. Typically, more than six months of inventory is characterized as a buyer's market, meaning that the buyers have more control, and less than six months of inventory is a seller's

market, meaning the sellers have more control. This year, the months supply of inventory dropped from 6.7 in January to 5.3 in November, putting the market clearly in the hands of the sellers. Houses properly priced, in good condition, and staged to show are selling quickly.

Many industry analysts predicted a rise in mortgage rates in 2017. Surprisingly, this did not happen. After a slight bump in the beginning of the year, rates remained historically low, hovering around 4%. Higher mortgage interest rates affect the affordability of homes by making monthly payments higher. A 1% increase in interest rates can decrease purchasing power by 10%, knocking some buyers out of the market and diminishing competition for homes.

Right now seems to be a sweet spot for both sellers and buyers, although some able and willing buyers can't find a home to buy. The lack of inventory means sellers are getting strong prices, and low mortgage interest rates mean that buyers have lower monthly payments. This combination is causing buyers to get off the fence and make offers. The low days on market tells them that if

they wait, they might miss out on a house they love.

Of course, other factors affect the housing market including the overall economy, encompassing unemployment and inflation, as well as governmental policy decisions. Rockland has low unemployment at 4.5%, and nationally inflation is at 1.6% in 2017. Low numbers for each contribute to a solid market, for the time being.

What will happen to the real estate market in Rockland County in 2018? It is anyone's guess. Some of the anticipated changes in the tax code, specifically caps on the mortgage interest deduction and the property tax deduction, could have a serious dampening effect on real estate sales in Rockland as well as Westchester, both counties with high home values and high taxes. Add rising mortgage interest rates into the mix and there is a real risk for a serious downturn in the market.

At the moment, though, the rate of home sales, rising home prices, low months supply of inventory, and low mortgage rates point to a healthy real estate market in 2018. While it is impossible to time the market perfectly, the bird's eye view says whether you are a buyer or a seller, right now is a very good time to be in the market.

Jennifer Mallory is the Team Leader and an Associate Broker with Keller Williams Hudson Valley Realty in New City. In 2018, she will serve as Regional Vice President/Rockland for the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, and as Vice-Chair of the Young Professionals Network.



# REDC Celebrates 30th Anniversary Honors Four Firms at Annual Meeting

By John Jordan

SUFFERN—A record crowd of more than 300 business and civic leaders attended the Rockland Economic Development Corp.'s Annual Luncheon on Nov. 3rd at the Crowne Plaza Hotel here. The event, which commemorated the 30th year of operation of the county's chief economic development agency, also honored a county-based service provider, manufacturer, entrepreneur and transformational company that helped invigorate the Rockland County economy.

The 2017 honorees were the Rockland County YMCA (Service Provider of the Year), Caribbean Food Delights (Manufacturer of the Year), Robin E. Rosenberg of the Garnerville Arts & Industrial Center (Entrepreneur of the Year) and fifteenfortyseven Critical Systems Realty (Transformational Award).

In addition to the award presentations, the event featured addresses by Rockland County Executive Ed Day, key REDC officials as well as an insightful presentation by special guest speaker Stefan Pryor, Secretary of Commerce for Rhode Island, who drew parallels to the successes he has achieved in Rhode Island with the opportunities that now exist in his native Rockland County for future growth.

REDC President and CEO Jeremy Schulman reported that the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council had selected a record four Rockland County initiatives as priority projects in the upcoming Consolidated Funding Application process. (**Editor's Note:** All four priority projects were among a total of 10 specifically Rockland-based projects that were selected to receive state funding. For project specifics, see story on page 16)

"REDC has changed Rockland's economic development landscape with a fresh perspective by going beyond real estate and relocation services and



**Vincent HoSang of Caribbean Food Delights accepting the award for Manufacturer of the Year from County Executive Day.**

Century outlook," Schulman noted. "We liaise with town supervisors and mayors to ensure expeditious, predictable and comprehensive environmental, zoning and land use process outcomes. We hold topical roundtables and events to lay the groundwork for smart business development that can grow the local economy."

He stressed that the REDC's success is due in large part to its partnerships with Rockland County, the Rockland County Industrial Development Agency, the Rockland Business Association, Orange & Rockland Utilities, the Workforce Development Board, Empire State Development, the Hudson Valley Economic Development Corp., colleges and non-profits in the region.

Rockland County Executive Day echoed Schulman's comments, noting that it has taken a team effort to help turn around the county's finances and the overall economy in general.

"It is no accident that we are positioned so favorably and continue to attract and retain the type of industries that contribute to a strong and diversified tax base," Day said. "And the more successful we are at that the less we rely on property taxes and that is greatly important in attracting businesses and people here."

The highlight of the annual luncheon that feted REDC's "30 Years of Making it in Rockland" was the presentations to the 2017 major award winners.

**Manufacturer of the Year—Caribbean Food Delights & Royal Caribbean Bakery**—The companies began operations in 1978 in the Bronx by founders Vincent and Jeanette HoSang. The company later relocated to Mount Vernon and in 1994 moved to a 103,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in Tappan. In 2007, the company expanded its operations there by 30,000 square feet and today the firm is expanding its manufacturing lines and is contemplating a further expansion of its facilities in the next few years.

The companies' products, including its flagship product the Jamaican patty, are widely distributed with its patties now available around the world and at major retailers such as: Walmart, Sam's BJ's, Costco, major supermarkets, Price Rite, HEB, Publix, Winn Dixie and Harris Tweeter and others.

The company's corporate responsibility programs have definitely improved the quality of life here and outside the United States. The Vincent HoSang Family Foundation's Team Jamaica Bickle Nutrition and Feeding Program has provided more than 6,000 meals to Caribbean athletes at the Annual Penn Relay Carnival for the past 22 years. The firm's philanthropy has also extended

to providing scholarships to both the Lehman College Foundation and the University of West Indies.

In Rockland County, the firm is an ardent supporter of People to People, the Jamaican Civic and Cultural Association of Rockland, Jawonio, the Rockland Community Foundation and others.

**Entrepreneur of the Year—Robin E. Rosenberg, Garnerville Arts & Industrial Center**—Rosenberg serves as the president and CEO of Garnerville Holding Co., the parent of the Garnerville Arts & Industrial Center, a former 19th Century textile mill in West Haverstraw.

Rosenberg became president of Garnerville in 1998, taking over the real estate business from company founder and grandfather Louis and her father Robert. Robin, who at the time was a partner in the Manhattan law firm of Sive, Paget & Risel, P.C., took over full-time duties at Garnerville in 2001 and began redeveloping the 335,000-square-foot complex that consists of 27 buildings on 14 acres.

The Great Recession and the devastation wrought by Hurricane Irene in 2011 brought tremendous hardship to the Garnerville facility, which lost 60% of its tenant base, saw its non-profit Art Center's gallery destroyed and risked closure. Since then, however, Robin has determinedly brought the complex back to life by preserving its historic attributes, bringing cultural events to the center and creating a mixed-use zone for the complex that has fostered the attraction of light industrial, design trades, artists, restaurants, offices and other uses.

Today, the Garnerville Arts & Industrial Center houses 110 business, including the Industrial Arts Brewing Co., and the soon to be open Hudson's Mill Restaurant and the Stack Street Café. In total, the complex employs more than 300 workers and welcomes more than 30,000 visitors per year.

**Service Provider of the Year—Rockland YMCA**—The non-profit has been serving Rockland County for more than 125 years. In 1927, the Rockland YMCA constructed a building in Nyack that included a gymnasium, swimming pool, meeting rooms and a bowling alley. In 2016, the YMCA completed a major capital project to restore its storied building and undertake needed renovations of the first floor. The historic building at 35 South Broadway remains a cornerstone in Nyack and still houses many of its programs.

The Rockland YMCA also has its North Rockland administrative offices in Stony Point, a School Age Child Care office at 37 South Broadway in Nyack, a Suffern branch at 18 Parkside Drive and a YMCA Drop in Childcare at the Courthouse at 1 South Main St. in New City.

Currently, the YMCA serves more than 6,900 members and program participants—boys, girls, men and women—at a total of 25 locations in diverse communities throughout Rockland County. The YMCA is also one of the leading childcare providers in Rockland County, serving more than 1,100 children at 23 before-and after-school programs in cooperation with five school districts—Clarkstown, North Rockland, South Orangetown and Suffern.

Augmenting its \$5 million budget, a total of 1,544 youth and 918 adults of low income families received \$249,005 in financial assistance and program subsidies for membership that allowed them to take part in YMCA programs in 2016.

The YMCA is continuing its program expansion in North Rockland with a Community Partnership Program in cooperation with the United Way of Rockland, the North Rockland School

District and the Haverstraw Center, providing after school enrichment activities and school sports at the North Rockland High School Extension. The initiative has served more than 500 youth and adults.

At present, the YMCA employs 206 full and part-time employees and also benefits from nearly 200 volunteers.

**Transformational Award—fifteenfortyseven Critical Systems Realty**—Rockland County has become a hub for data center development. In April 2015, fifteenfortyseven (1547) Critical Systems,



**Chuck Maze, Executive Director, Rockland County YMCA, Service Provider of the Year**

which was formed in 2011, opened its flagship operation at 1 Ramland Road in Orangeburg.

The 232,000-square-foot, 24MW data center sits on 32 acres and provides custom built turn-key data center capacity for enterprise clients. The facility also features a 60,000-square-foot business continuity and disaster recovery center providing a reliable and secure contingency worksite to enable companies to mitigate risk.

In September 2016, the firm announced the opening of the Disaster Recovery space totaling 3,460 square feet with five dedicated offices and 2,500 square feet of open desk area.

The build-out completes Phase I of the Disaster Recovery space in Orangeburg, and includes 84 office seats that can be leased in a dedicated or shared environment allowing customers a physical office, on-site, available on demand.

Today, 1547 currently is the developer and operator of custom-designed data centers totaling more than 750,000 square feet. Besides Orangeburg, the company operates data center facilities in Chicago, Cheyenne, WI, Kapolei HI.

"With our recent co-location offering announcement and the addition of Disaster Recovery space within the facility, our Orangeburg data center is continuing to make advancements needed to support our growing client base," said John Bonczek, president of 1547 DataCenters Division. "In addition to making sure your data is secure and up and running if a disaster strikes, the Disaster Recovery space supplies your most critical asset, your employees, with the office space needed to continue working under any circumstance."

In August of this year, CIM Group, in partnership with 1547 Critical Systems Realty, announced they had acquired 400 Paul Ave. in San Francisco. The site is fully-entitled for the development of a 187,000-square-foot data center with 24MW of power capacity. The acquisition also includes two 1930s-era buildings totaling 54,225 square feet that will be improved to serve as office and support space for data center tenants.



**Stefan Pryor, Secretary of Commerce of Rhode Island, Special Guest Speaker**

drilling down to assist industry with the resources it needs," Schulman said. "We are doing so by utilizing a toolkit of programs, technical assistance, urban planning and social enterprise."

Schulman also noted that REDC, which also operates the region's only Procurement Technical Assistance Center from its Pearl River offices, worked with between 60 to 70 companies in 2017 in relocation, expansion or retention efforts in Rockland County. He added that the REDC's work with those companies has contributed to a 3% increase in jobs from the first quarter of 2016 to the first quarter of 2017.

"Our shared economic development goals align in fostering an entrepreneurial culture where one can 'Make it in Rockland'—right now—but with a 22nd



# Rockland Secures Nearly \$6 Million in State Funding

ALBANY—Rockland County, reversing years of earlier frustration in landing state funding under Gov. Andrew Cuomo's Consolidated Funding Application competition, took home an impressive \$5.8 million in CFA funding in this year's competition.

Rockland County Executive Ed Day said the awards include funds to expand private businesses, revitalize communities and encourage tourism.

"This investment in Rockland County will pay off in terms of increased economic development," the County Executive said. "Rockland is in an era of renewal and we thank the state for recognizing our efforts to create a welcoming economic environment."

The Regional Economic Development Council awards include \$84.8 million for 113 projects in the Mid-Hudson Region, which includes Rockland County. The funding award was an increase over last year, when the Mid-Hudson region was awarded \$83.3 million. Rockland County received more than \$3 million in awards last year.

In the first three years of the program, 2011-2013, Rockland County received a combined total of \$5 million.

Day became County Executive in 2014 and made it a priority of his administration to seek additional funding through the Regional Economic Development Council.

"We thank Lucy Redzeposki, our Director of Economic Growth and Tourism, for reviving our participation in this program and steering our applications through the process," Day said. "All of Rockland County will benefit."

Awards were made to a variety of businesses, municipalities and non-profits throughout the county, including revitalization efforts in Sloatsburg and West Nyack, infrastructure improvements along the Sparkill Creek in Orangetown, building projects at Nyack Hospital, rehabilitating trails that run through Rockland County and funding to promote a beer festival at the Garner Arts Center in North Rockland. The Town of Stony Point was awarded funds to study shared services

Numerous Rockland businesses were also given grants to help them grow, including Cambridge Security Seals in Pomona, Chartwell Pharmaceuticals in Congers, Praxair Surface Technologies in Orangetown, and VITS International Inc., in Blauvelt.

"REDC is proud to have provided direct planning support resulting in an approximately 100% increase in funding from last year to this year," said REDC President and CEO Jeremy Schulman. "It is a testament to the recognition by the state of the exciting projects advanced by industry leaders in advanced manufacturing, healthcare and tourism which will grow Rockland's business and benefit the Hudson Valley region."

The grants announced on Dec. 13th include:

- **\$1.05 million—West Nyack Hamlet Green Revitalization**—The Town of Clarkstown Wetlands Restoration project will restore a degraded wetland and construct a porous pavement parking lot at the adjacent town park. This project will improve water quality in the Hackensack River and enhance revitalization efforts in the Hamlet of West Nyack.

- **\$1 million—Phase II of the Tuxedo Sloatsburg Corridor Revitalization Project** includes expansion of 7 Lakes Inn, creation of a bike shop adjacent to Harriman State Park with access to Sterling Forest trails, transformation of a long-vacant grocery store into a mixed use space and significant landscaping to showcase the Historic Stewart farm.

- **\$864,000—VITS International Inc.** will expand in its current manufacturing facility in Blauvelt and will be purchasing



**Nyack Hospital is set to commence its ambitious Care Transformation Project that includes the construction of a two-story addition, which will double the size of the existing Emergency Department and add a new Medical Village. The hospital secured CFA funding for its Transitional Care Unit on the fourth floor 4-Maze Nursing Unit.**

new fabrication equipment to keep up with increasing demand for its printing and packing supplies.

- **\$730,000—Cambridge Security Seals** will expand its existing facility in Pomona, which will enable the company to construct an additional three production lines and the support equipment, as well as provide necessary warehouse space to keep up with demand for their products.

- **\$700,000—Chartwell Pharmaceuticals Congers Expansion Project**—The initiative will expand the company's manufacturing footprint for finished dose manufacture and logistics. The project will include new laboratories, office, storage and production space to enhance production capacity.

- **\$340,000—Nyack Hospital Transitional Care Unit**—Nyack Hospital will renovate and retrofit existing space on the fourth floor 4-Maze Nursing Unit to create a 16-patient Transitional Care Unit. Room partitions will be reconfigured, a new fire sprinkler system will be added and the HVAC system will be modified along with electrical and plumbing as

needed. A dining room and country kitchen as well as an activity room will be created in addition to the patient rooms.

- **\$220,000—Construction of Sparkill Creek/ Route 303 Culvert**—The Town of Orangetown will replace an inadequately sized and deteriorated culvert along the Sparkill Creek at Route 303 with a built-in-place concrete culvert. Water flow and water quality will be further enhanced by removing a deteriorated pump house in the stream and restoring the stream-bank.

- **\$157,040—The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference**—will build and rehabilitate eroded and worn sections of the Ramapo, Dunderberg Trail and Kakiat, Triangle, and Tuxedo-Mt. Ivy trails. These trails intersect and connect with long-distance trail systems, including the Appalachian Trail, the Long Path, the 150-mile Highlands Trail, and the route of the new Empire State Trail.

- **\$120,375—GARNER Historic District**—GARNER Arts Center will develop and promote "The Craft Beer Immersive Arts Festival," a special event planned for May 18-19, 2019, which will combine

agritourism, craft beverage and art resources, increasing tourism awareness and visitation to the area.

- **\$66,000—Praxair Surface Technologies, Inc., Orangetown Lean Manufacturing Skills Training**—Praxair will offer skills training to low and middle skills employees in three Lean Manufacturing model areas: Waste Elimination; Machine Maintenance; and Workplace Organization.

- **\$25,000 – Rockland County Shared Services Program**—Rockland County will evaluate the feasibility of shared service between the Town of Stony Point Police Department and the Rockland County Sheriff's Department. The project will study the possibility of, and provide cost estimates for, the consolidation of police dispatching services between the town and county.

In addition, Rockland County will benefit from two additional awards made to organizations in the region:

- **\$500,000 – Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County** will encompass the seven counties of the Mid-Hudson Region including Rockland County and create marketing materials for distribution via websites and social media to raise awareness and provide funding to producers for participation in the New York State Grown & Certified Agricultural Producer's Grant program.

- **\$40,000 – Pace University Mid-Hudson Municipal Redevelopment Readiness**—The Land Use Law Center at Pace Law School will use its regional land use and sustainable development conference to advance economic growth in the region, including Rockland County. The conference highlights local government approaches for overcoming challenges and finding solutions that target new ways to plan, regulate, and design communities.

For more information on the grants go to:

<https://www.ny.gov/sites/ny.gov/files/atoms/files/2017AwardsREDCRound7Blookletdjunys.pdf>

## IN-DEPTH 2018

### Special Supplement Schedule

<b>JAN.</b>	<b>HGAR Annual Report+ Hudson Valley Real Estate Report</b>
<b>MAR.</b>	<b>Health Care Supplement</b>
<b>APR.</b>	<b>HV Visionary Conference+ Hudson Valley Real Estate Report</b>
<b>MAY</b>	<b>Westchester County Supplement</b>
<b>JUNE</b>	<b>Hospitality/Tourism Supplement</b>
<b>SEPT.</b>	<b>Orange County Supplement</b>
<b>OCT.</b>	<b>NYC Global Forum Supplement + Hudson Valley Real Estate Report</b>
<b>NOV.</b>	<b>Bronx County Supplement</b>
<b>DEC.</b>	<b>Rockland County Supplement</b>



# REDC Looks to Grow Economy With New Initiatives

By John Jordan

PEARL RIVER—Flushed from the record success in the annual Consolidated Funding Application competition where more than 10 critical projects in Rockland County secured state funding, REDC President and CEO Jeremy Schulman said the county's economic development agency plans a host of targeted initiatives and programs geared at attracting new business and growing existing commerce in Rockland in 2018.

Schulman, a veteran economic development specialist in the Hudson Valley, was hired by the REDC to lead the organization in November 2016. In an interview with *Real Estate In-Depth*, he said that REDC's 30th year of operation in 2017 was very successful and entering the new year the organization is now focused on some exciting new programs.

## Doubling Down on Priority Sectors

Schulman said that REDC will "double down" by placing greater emphasis on expanding the following growth sectors in Rockland County: Advanced Manufacturing, Food & Beverage, High-Tech Data Centers, Hospitality/Tourism and Biomed.

Working in cooperation with Rockland County's Director of Economic Growth and Tourism Lucy Redzeposki and other key stakeholders, REDC will also work to strengthen village and downtown centers with a particular focus on trans-

portation corridors. The agency also is looking to continue to foster small business development in Rockland County.

Schulman said that at the close of 2017, RJ Brands, a New Jersey-based kitchen appliance firm was scheduled to close on the purchase of the 50,400-square-foot former Keebler building at 29 Corporate Drive in Orangeburg. The \$6.8-million project involves the relocation of the company from Mahwah, NJ to Rockland County.

"What we are finding is that any properties for sale within the 50,000-square-foot range and above are being snatched up at market prices and above, which demonstrates the strength of Rockland's commercial real estate market," Schulman reported. Some of the other significant deals of note in the priority sectors include Linen Choice/Sanders Collection, an advance manufacturing firm, relocating its headquarters and consolidating its other

facilities from across the country into 110,000 square feet of space in Orangeburg. That deal, according to the REDC, was valued at more than \$14 million.

Other notable recent manufacturing deals include expansions by Caribbean Food Delights and Rockland Bakery to name a few.

In the biomed sector, Endo International plc, the parent of Par Pharmaceuticals, expanded the Par campus by acquiring the 24,400-square-foot 80 Schoolhouse Road property for \$2.5 million. The company's expansion plans also include an increase in the firm's leased space.

In the Food & Beverage sector, there have been a host of craft beverage



REDC is collaborating with Pattern for Progress to host a charrette (visioning exercise) to assist Garnerville Arts & Industrial Center with a campus economic development plan in the first quarter of 2018.



From left, Lin Simeti, PTAC Program Director; Zach Tuttle, PTAC Counselor; Jeremy L. Schulman, REDC President & CEO, Phyllis W. Tucker, REDC Director of Operations & Marketing and Jayne Nichols, REDC Executive Assistant.

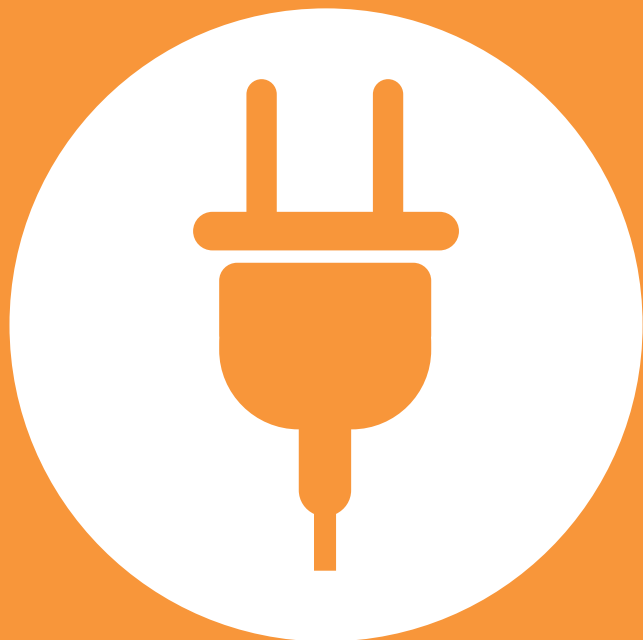
operations opening their doors in the county. Scheduled for opening in early 2018 is Gentle Giant Brewing Co. at 7 North Main St. in Pearl River. Another exciting development in this burgeoning sector is the planned RCC Culinary Center at the former Presidential Life Building in Nyack. At press time a lease agreement was pending for a total of 15,000 square feet of space that will feature classrooms, a training facility, a multimedia amphitheater and a proposed "Taste of NY Shop."

In conjunction with the Food & Beverage Center, REDC is also promoting satellite higher educational resources; looking to help strengthen the Nyack village center, which is already a Hudson River destination and hub for food and beverage entrepreneurs; engaging in a public-private-partnership on the development of a Rockland Hops Yard concept in collaboration with Gentle Giant and RCC and also seeking to push forward a

Continued on page 19

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**OUR ENERGY**



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# A Conversation with County Executive Ed Day

Continued from page 14

because we have done well on sales tax and other revenues so that money went to the deficit and the general fund. It is always good to underestimate your revenues because if you overestimate them you get to the problem we had. Having been a part-time legislator I saw what was going on (in the past) there were (budget) numbers being sent out just to make it work. The example I use is that three years prior to my arrival (as County Executive) we had double-digit tax increases—30%, 18% and 11%— at the same time we had those increases in taxes our deficit was going from \$96 million to \$124 million to \$138 million. So the average person I say is this: “You are working overtime and you are bringing in extra money into your household, but when you look at your balance sheet, you look at your household budget, you are losing money. There is something desperately wrong with that picture. You cannot be losing money if you are bringing in more money unless there is something desperately wrong. We were in a free-fall and that is really something we can never return to. Part of it is what I call as an ex-cop, a ‘self-inflicted gun shot wound.’ It happened because it was allowed to happen. I will not allow it to happen (again) and neither will my people.

**Q:** You have implemented aggressive tax collection and code enforcement initiatives. Have these programs proven successful?

**Day:** Wildly so. We found that with the way the state law works you are allowed three years (to pay county property tax debt) before there is a foreclosure for being behind on your taxes. However, that is only residential properties, there were a plethora of commercial lots that essentially owners of these properties were not doing anything illegal, but they were taking advantage of the system...

Our law department and again (County Attorney) Tom Humback did a marvelous job on this, they researched the law

and found that you don't need to give them three years, give them two years and we sent notices out to everybody and we forced payment, we forced their hand and foreclosed. The largest foreclosure we did was Patrick Farm and it was a classic example of what people will do to use a system to their advantage. We foreclosed on Patrick Farm—\$380,000 was due, we foreclosed. Thirty hours later we had a check for \$380,000. So clearly it was not a matter that they didn't have the money. They were using the system legally and what was happening in all these (foreclosure) court battles going on was essentially we were using our money to fight ourselves and I think that is wrong. We collected about \$2.4 million of the \$2.8 million that was out there so that money goes right to our county coffers and especially when you are in deficit to deficit reduction, so that was very helpful.

Code enforcement—this is something to me that I am duty bound to do. When I first ran for office I said I was going to do certain things to improve code enforcement I was told that the county can't do a thing about it because (New York) is a home rule state. My favorite answer was they should have asked my mother about this because mom would know not to tell Eddy he can't do something.

We utilized our Health Commissioner Dr. (Patricia Schnabel) Ruppert and Dr. Catherine Johnson Southern, who is now Deputy Commissioner of Health and we created the Rockland Codes Initiative, in conjunction with Tom Humback, our County Attorney. Essentially we started enforcing the (county) Sanitary Code. It is not zoning, it is not building codes, you work in tandem with the towns and villages that choose to work with us. Those who do not work with us, that's fine, we are doing it anyway. We have collected over a half million dollars in fines and more importantly, nobody has been evicted. What we are doing is

turning slumlords into landlords. That is what we are trying to do. We have no problem with anybody owning a home, renting it out and comporting with the law. That is a good thing, you are supplying good clean housing. But, when you carve out apartments and have five, six, seven, eight apartment cubby holes in a house where you take the poorest of the poor, the people with the least voice and victimize them for cash rents, when you jeopardize our firefighters, as a former first-responder, you are going to have an enemy in me. Our approach to this has been very successful. Have we cured this? No, because it has been going on for a long time, but we have had a significant impact. We have had some true success stories out there and now we are taking it to the next step. We now have a Rental Registry we are doing.

Initially, nobody wanted to do it. We had a grace period, we weren't looking to be bullies about it. But, after three months we said if you don't register the same fines that are incurred for violating the sanitary code, which is \$2,000 a day per violation, will be levied unless you comply with the law. We have gotten more compliance now. The key is here is that we are going to end up getting a much sharper picture of the rental housing stock in Rockland County. Think of the possibilities now, especially if you are looking at businesses expanding and wondering if we have the affordable housing for people to stay here. But, if we can get a good handle on the rental stock in Rockland County, it's empirical data, it is not anecdotal, we will know exactly what we have.

**Q:** With the impending completion of the new Tappan Zee Bridge (Mario M. Cuomo Bridge) do you see any signs that the new span will provide a boost to the Rockland County economy?

**Day:** Left to its own devices it will, however, my concern is the tolls. The tolls can kill us. I can't be more clear about

this—government has a knack for doing things that kill the private sector. They just love doing it...

I was very clear in 2012 when the comment was made about a \$14 to \$15 toll by (then Gov. Andrew Cuomo aide Larry Schwartz), I said that was unacceptable. There are a number of things we can do to stop that. Number one is the 524-mile waterway—the New York Canal System—was being funded by tolls on the Thruway. That was a magic trick done by the (State) Legislature some years back. It was widely criticized by (former) governors and by the State Comptroller and just recently was stopped. Your toll money was going to the waterways. You also have a Bridge Authority and a Tunnel Authority. The same politicians that talk about consolidation when I mention this say, ‘Oh no, you can't consolidate the Bridge Authority, that is in our backyard.’ Why not?

The issue with the Bank Settlement Fund; I think we got \$1 billion, but that is spread across the entire Thruway. Well, I am sorry we have a \$3.9-billion project here. We have over \$6 billion in that fund. (The new bridge) is the largest project in New York State history; that money should be going to that bridge.

The other thing that troubles me is that the Thruway Authority is being told why don't you kick in some money and they go ‘No we are not going to do that, this is only to be paid for by the area.’ Well, how come you were taking all this money from us from the (Tappan Zee) tolls and using it for your Thruway operations. I think about 25% of the Thruway operations has been funded by the Tappan Zee tolls for years. Well, we want pay back now.

**Editor's Note:** County Executive Day expressed his concern over the economic impact high priced tolls on the Mario M. Cuomo Bridge would have on Rockland County, prompting shoppers to forego the Palisades Center and The Shops at Nanuet malls in favor of Ridge Hill or other retail destinations east of Hudson.

My final point on this, our federal representatives keep hiding on this issue and I keep bringing it up. Our federal officials voted with (the late Sen.) Ted Stephens in Alaska to build the infamous “Bridge to Nowhere,” completely paid for (by the federal government) We got a TIFIA loan. That is insulting to this county and absolutely insulting to this region. We want that bridge funded. It is an interstate. It is the lynchpin of a more than 400-mile interstate highway system. We want this funded by the federal government also and they have not done the job. A loan has to be paid back. You are doing us no favors giving us a loan. If you can fund the “Bridge to Nowhere,” you sure as heck can fund some of this bridge. Work with the state and do half and half and maintain the toll at \$5.

**Q:** Do you think the business climate in Rockland County has improved since you first took office?

**Day:** Absolutely, there is no question about it, just by the fact that we have more (Consolidated Funding) applications, more businesses coming in, and again what that translates into are jobs. You hear so much in the political circles about “We are creating jobs.” Government does not create jobs unless it hires people and taxpayers pay for it. What government can do is create fertile ground for development and that is what government should do and that is what we are doing... Right now since I came into office we have a 25% lower unemployment rate. We are hovering around 4%. So, we are doing well.


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# Rockland County Executive Presses Legislature To Facilitate Sale of ‘Six-Story Paperweight’

By John Jordan

NEW CITY—Rockland County Executive Ed Day presided over the permanent closure of the six-story Sain office building here on Dec. 5th where he urged county lawmakers to facilitate the multi-million dollar sale of the property to make way for a senior assisted living facility.

Day announced that the last of the county departments operating at the building relocated to other space a few days earlier and that the county-owned building that features a swimming pool filled with cement is now permanently closed.

“Today we happily mark the end of an era in Rockland County government,” Day said as he stood on the steps of the 18 New Hempstead Road building. “The Sain Building is now officially closed. It is now a six-story paperweight.”

Massachusetts-based National Development Acquisition LLC hopes to acquire the Sain Building, demolish the structure and replace it with a two-story senior assisted living facility. The firm has

reportedly offered to purchase the property for \$4.51 million—\$510,000 over the assessed value. The County Executive noted that the Town of Clarkstown has endorsed the sale of the building.

Day is urging the County Legislature to declare the property as surplus so that the sale can move forward. “Let’s get rid of an eyesore in the center of New City and add a ratable to the tax roll,” he said. “It’s time to embrace the future.”

Day said he plans to use a portion of the building sale proceeds toward settlements of expired county government employee union contracts.

The recently relocated employees joined the Department of Personnel, Consumer Protection, Economic Growth and Tourism and the Youth Bureau in newly renovated offices in Building A at the Dr. Robert Yeager Health Center complex in Pomona. Building A at the Health Center is becoming a health and human services hub in Rockland County.



Rockland County Executive Ed Day says the County Legislature should approve the sale of the Sain Building, which he termed as an “eyesore in the center of New City.” A developer has proposed to pay more than \$4.5 million for the office building and build a senior assisted-living facility at the site.

## Rockland Lands Another Major Data Center Project

ORANGETOWN—Rockland County continues to be a hub for major data center users. Most recently, Bloomberg and fifteenfortyseven Critical Systems Realty have developed major facilities in Rockland. In October, JP Morgan Chase became the latest to announce plans for a Rockland County location.

On Oct. 18th, JP Morgan Chase closed on the \$7.5-million purchase of 60 acres of town-owned land at the Rockland

Psychiatric Center for construction of the data center. The town estimates the project to be valued at \$435 million. JP Morgan Chase did not comment or provide details on its planned data center project.

The town of Orangetown in an announcement stated that the project would involve an estimated \$40 million in remediation costs, a new electrical substation, as well as the construction of the data center building itself. Off-site

improvements include an upgrade to nearby sewers, water lines, a new traffic signal at the intersection of Convent Road and Third Avenue, and improved nearby access roads.

Town Supervisor Andy Stewart said the town began discussions with JP Morgan Chase’s real estate team about the site in September 2016. Knowing that the bank had other sites in mind and that the speed of the process was an important factor in the bank’s site selection process, he said the town set what he termed was an ambitious site planning and approval schedule, and by mid-June

of this year granted final approval for the project from the Town Planning Board. However, the deal was contingent on obtaining various easements for vehicles and utilities from New York State and other approvals, which put off the sale of the property until October.

Steve Porath, executive director of the County of Rockland Industrial Development Agency, said the IDA authorized on April 20th sales tax exemptions of \$35.5 million over a 20-year period in connection with JP Morgan Chase’s \$423.5 million in capital investment.

## REDC Looks to Grow Economy

Continued from page 17

proposed Culinary Corridor in the Route 303 area in Orangetown to identify and market the food manufacturing cluster in Rockland County.

“The idea is to leverage the momentum of the organics sprouting up of all these Food & Beverage companies and manufacturers to be able to brand them as a cluster and help recruit others here and strengthen the existing cluster,” Schulman said. The initiative could also involve new signage, assisting with grant funding, property tours, etc.

Rockland is also seeing a host of mixed-use transit oriented projects take shape, including: a 1 million-square-foot proposal in Spring Valley to include residential housing, retail, office, as well as a parking garage and planned Spring Valley train station improvements; the Sheldon, a 92-unit apartment building

in Suffern adjacent to the train station, and TZ Vista, which is developing a 128-unit apartment building on Gedney St. in Nyack.

Some of the other notable programs REDC is engaged in include: assisting Jawnio with a therapeutic hiking path and Hopper House with its growth campaign and proposed visitor center in an effort to advance their amazing social enterprises. REDC is also collaborating with Pattern for Progress to host a charrette (visioning exercise) to assist Garnerville Arts & Industrial Center with a campus economic development plan in the first quarter of 2018.

REDC anticipates that the high level of activity combined with concrete support will translate into several key announcements in 2018.

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# Rockland Economic Development Corporation

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## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS AND INCENTIVES IN ROCKLAND COUNTY



#### REDC'S Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)

provides free technical assistance to established businesses seeking to sell their products and services to local, state and federal government agencies. Since 1988 REDC PTAC has influenced over two billion dollars in government contract awards for its clients in Rockland and Orange Counties.

##### What we offer:

- Education on federal, state and local government procurement requirements
- Marketing products and services counseling
- Advisement and assistance with:
  - Preparation and submission of applications, certifications, registrations, bids and proposals
  - Pursuit and securing of subcontracting opportunities from prime contractors
  - Post-award functions
- Education through seminars, workshops and webinars
- Bid-match program based on individual client profile



**Empire State Development (ESD)**, New York's chief economic development agency, provides a range of different business incentives. The Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) is a single online application providing access to resources from numerous agencies and programs.

##### Incentive programs offered by ESD include:

- The Excelsior Jobs Program
- ESD Regional Council Capital Fund
- Empire State Economic Development Fund
- Urban and Community Development Program
- Industrial Development Bond Cap
- Environmental Investment Program
- START-UP NY

#### Orange & Rockland

**Orange and Rockland Utilities (O&R)** offers an Economic Development Incentive Rate (EDR) which provides a 20% discount off normal delivery rates for new or expanding business customers.

##### How to benefit:

- Add 65kW demand to electric system
- Obtain an energy efficiency audit by NYSERDA or independent qualified energy efficiency firm

##### What we offer:

- Generous incentives and turn-key options for energy efficient upgrades:
- Lighting
  - Refrigeration
  - Energy management systems
  - Variable speed drives
  - HVAC
  - and more



**The Rockland County Career Center** brings employment professionals from the private and public sectors together with employers and job seekers. They provide free-of-charge services for career exploration, employment search, job training and workforce support. Training resource centers are located on the Haverstraw and Suffern campuses of Rockland Community College.

##### What we offer:

- Free hiring services
- Customized workforce training to meet individual business needs
- On-the-job workplace training for employees needing specialized attention
- Analysis of workforce effectiveness by identifying trends and demand occupations



**Rockland SCORE** assists a broad range of clients in successfully managing their business operation and ownership. Clients include small business owners, career changers, entrepreneurs and non-profit organizations. Rockland SCORE is part of a volunteer, non-profit national organization and resource partner with the US Small Business Administration (SBA).

##### What we offer:

- Understanding small business operations and criteria for success
- Development of business plans to assess the reality and risks associated with ideas and operations
- Free private and confidential mentoring services, Monday thru Friday



**The Rockland County Industrial Development Agency (IDA)** offers incentives to specific projects. Please contact the Rockland IDA for more details and to determine if a project is eligible for consideration.

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REDC is a 501c3, non-profit public/private corporation providing economic development services in Rockland County, NY.