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ANNUAL  
REPORT

*Martin County  
Economic  
Development  
Authority*

[www.MartinCountyEDA.org](http://www.MartinCountyEDA.org)

MARTIN  
COUNTY  
EDA **Ignite**  
An Entrepreneurial & Business Network

## 2013 YEAR-END SUMMARY

Our key objectives are to start, stabilize, and grow businesses; retain and create jobs; increase tax revenues; and create a welcoming environment for innovation and economic development. In 2013, MCEDA successfully provided technical business assistance to 32 entrepreneurs and spent more than 552 hours in performing services. Adding to our notable highlights, we stabilized approximately two, expanded six, and facilitated the creation of three businesses. Most importantly, we served as a catalyst in retaining and creating approximately 36 jobs in Martin County, a moderate increase in the number of jobs created compared to 2011, demonstrating a stronger rural economy over the following year.

Utilizing the RCEF business model creates exceptional cost savings for Martin County. Year after year we are able to produce tremendous results off very little expenses.

In an effort to help promote our services and involvement, we participated in several community development activities and events such as the Martin County Fair, Southern Minnesota Partnership for Regional Competitiveness, Area Career Exploration (ACE), Martin County Leadership Program (MCEDA provided scholarships for people to attend program); Fairmont Strategic Planning, and Bureau 14. Community visits that were started in 2011 were continued in 2013. MCEDA also succeeded in working with local legislators for continued funding for business and entrepreneurial services.

Also in efforts to create awareness and better serve our communities, we continue to host a talk radio program on the KSUM 1370AM radio station. The program is called "EDA Business Talk" and is aired twice a month on Monday's from 4:45pm-5:00pm. The purpose of the program is to provide listeners with relevant business information and to discuss economic development topics. Some subjects covered include interviews with EDA Board members, a banks perspective of our current economic landscape, and spotlight on current clients from around the county.

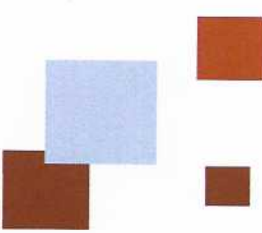
We are tremendously pleased with our success. We continue to strengthen and grow our strategic partnerships to facilitate the success of our clients. Our Business Facilitators are continuously trained on the latest trends in business to ensure our clients are being served by the very best.

### PROJECTS STARTED IN 2013 AND STILL IN PROGRESS:

- County Branding Project , including mobile friendly website and red information packets in every city office.
- Business Retention/Expansion Study.
- Vocational training needs for area businesses.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- Area Career Exploration Event (ACE).
- Martin County leadership Program (2012-2013) Sponsorship.
- Business Talk Radio program: On the first Monday of every month.
- Client Business Consultation Services.
- Member of Minnesota Association of County Economic Developers (MAPCED).



ACTIVITY & CLIENT RESULTS	2013
Entrepreneurs Consulted	32
Consulting Hours	552
New Businesses Created	4
Businesses Stabilized	4
Businesses Expanded	1
Jobs Created and/or Retained	37

*\*The figures in this report are approximate.*

## 2013 HIGHLIGHTED SUCCESS STORIES

### CUP 'N SAUCER CAFE

The Cup 'N Saucer Café in Sherburn, was a great project combining philanthropy, college student input, entrepreneurship, and a small town rallying to save an old café. MCEDA Ignite got involved when an older gentleman needed help giving away a small town café. Gene Scheppman invested over \$40,000 of his own money into remodeling the Cup 'N Saucer Café, and was running it with his wife. But his intent was never to keep the café and become owner. His intentions were more selfless, and he looked for a way to give the café to a deserving person or couple and decided on an essay contest. MCEDA Ignite facilitated the contest and Bethany Lutheran College students got involved to document the process. The town came together and shared their stories of the café that had been a fixture of Sherburn for over 50 years. MCEDA Ignite and Mr. Scheppman reviewed the applications and picked 4 finalists to present their visions for the café. Ultimately Seth and Elizabeth Lintelman of Minneapolis won the contest and the café. MCEDA Ignite continues to work with the Lintelmans to help them assimilate into their new roles. This project not only saved a café for a community, but by keeping the café open saved jobs as well.

### SERENADES RESTAURANT

Sarah and Nate Brown came to MCEDA Ignite office looking for assistance when knee-deep in remodeling a 5,000 sq. ft. abandoned restaurant they purchased. They had an ambitious goal of opening in a few short months and needed help prioritizing some of their needs. MCEDA Ignite helped the Browns with several issues including HR; accounting and Quickbooks training; marketing; and other general start-up activities. Serenades by the Lake opened in early December, and despite typical new restaurant hurdles the Browns are excited and encouraged by the strong first few weekends. Revenue has grown while the Browns continue to address typical restaurant issues regarding employee training and customer service. MCEDA Ignite will keep assisting the Browns as needed. Upon opening Serenades had 20 part-time and 10 full-time employees.

### WHITE ORCHID BOUTIQUE

Brooke White had wanted to open her own women's clothing boutique for some time before coming into the MCEDA Ignite office. She had worked for years in the industry and had tremendous confidence that she could run her own boutique. MCEDA Ignite helped Ms. White with a business plan, marketing plan, and pro forma financials. Several possible locations were considered and evaluated; and a final location was chosen in downtown Fairmont. In May Ms. White was able to secure funding and in early June opened White Orchid Boutique. The retail store offers upscale women's clothing that customers are unable to find anywhere else in Fairmont. Ms. White has a the ability to spot trends and source unusual pieces to complement any women's style.

## 2013 OUTLOOK

The Martin County EDA has a very focused strategic plan set for 2013. We have full intentions of maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of the **IGNITE** business facilitation program. We will spend most of our energies toward assisting entrepreneurs and small businesses prosper in Martin County. In efforts to help entrepreneurs conveniently grow their business skills and knowledge, we will be hosting several new training seminars in Fairmont, MN.

We are increasingly poised to create greater awareness of our program. We will continue to provide relevant information to the communities in Martin County through our “*EDA Business Talk*” radio program on KSUM. We will also continue to make exciting new updates to our website to provide clients with relevant information at their fingertips. We plan to continue leveraging social media to create awareness of our services. We will also remain very active in attending community related events to leverage networking. In addition to these objectives, the **IGNITE** staff will continue to focus on the main street businesses of area towns, as well as offering relevant business planning classes for the communities we serve.

Lastly, we will focus on building new relationships and grow on existing relationships with local and non-local entities to provide a stronger network of resources for our clients. The Martin County Board of Directors and Business Facilitators look forward to an exciting year and growing on our previous success in serving as an catalyst for economic development in Martin County.

### Mission

The mission of the Martin County Economic Development Authority is to **Inspire Growth and Nurture Innovative Talent through Empowerment (IGNITE)**.

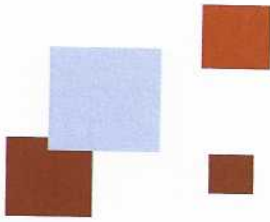
### Vision

**IGNITE** strives to facilitate, support, and encourage entrepreneurs, start-ups, and existing business owners with their ideas working from the bottom up to grow and sustain our vibrant community for the future.

### *Thanks to the Martin County Board of Commissioners*

*The Martin County EDA is funded by Martin County and the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED).*

*Thanks to our 2013 Partners: Regional Center for Entrepreneurial Facilitation (RCEF), Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Fairmont Economic Development Authority (EDA), City of Fairmont, Fairmont Area Chamber of Commerce, Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF)*



*The Martin County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA) performance data provided above is a snapshot for the reporting period of January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013. The reader should understand that the grassroots economic development strategy is continuously evolving and clients are constantly moving from various structures, forms, locations, and stages of development. This report is also inclusive of the client activity performed for the Martin County EDA.*