



## Pa. Association Honors Penn-Northwest, eCenter



Friday, October 10, 2014

MERCER, Pa. -- The Pennsylvania Economic Development Association recognized Penn-Northwest Economic Development Corp. this week for developing and executing its "Make it in! Mercer County" plan.

PEDA honored Penn-Northwest as its "large agency of the year" at its meeting in Hershey where it also recognized the eCenter@LindenPointe as "project of the year." Both awards are for efforts in 2013.

Begun three years ago, Make it in! Mercer County has focused on recruiting new industry to the county, a calling program on businesses within the county, local entrepreneurship, workforce development, marketing, increasing its membership and business administration, PEDDA noted.

The eCenter@LindenPointe provides incubation space and assistance for entrepreneurs including counseling. The eCenter opened two years ago at the LindenPointe Innovative Business Campus in Hermitage.

The president and CEO of Penn-Northwest, Randy Seitz, called the award for his agency "the icing on the cake, a nice pat on the back," to his organization's efforts that have borne fruit since he assumed the helm.

What has made Penn-Northwest efforts stand out, he said Thursday, "is that ours has been a very public effort that has allowed the public to hold us accountable. We post a monthly dashboard of success that allows you to see that we're meeting our objectives. We're in a fishbowl."

Efforts by Seitz and his staff, with the help of his board of directors -- the chairman is Lew Kachulis, president of Synergy Comp Insurance Co. -- have received 760 leads that led to Penn-Northwest extending 85 proposals. Those proposals resulted in 14 visits to examine firsthand sites in Mercer County with five new companies building plants here. "We've put our heart and soul into this," Seitz said.

PEDA is the statewide association of local, state corporate and nonprofit economic-

development professionals. Its mission is “to promote sound economic development policies and nurture an effective statewide network to foster the economic health of the commonwealth.”

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