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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**STARKE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION HOSTS
2016 MANUFACTURERS DAY
AND PROSPECTUS AND ACHIVEMENT EVENTS**

Starke County, Indiana, September 29, 2016 – How much do you know about the successful industries and opportunities available in our own local communities? The Starke County Economic Development Foundation (SCEDF) will host its 4th Annual Manufacturers Day and Prospectus & Achievement Event on Thursday, October 13, 2016, at the Knox Middle School. This year's event will spotlight 17 of our local industries including: American Oak, Elkay Manufacturing, Hoosier Custom Plastics, IP Callison & Sons, J.W. Hicks, Kemin Food Technologies, Knox Fertilizer Company, Kruz, Inc., MPI Products LLC, Manitex-Sabre, Metro Recycling, Norton Packaging, Inc., Thermo Products, LLC, Toll Integrated Systems, Traffic Control Specialists, Inc., WestRock Company, and White Flyer Targets, as well as Starke County Initiative for Lifelong Learning (SCILL).

SCEDF partners each year with Oregon-Davis, Knox, Culver, and North Judson-San Pierre School Corporations. Approximately 350 seventh grade students from those school corporations will visit the companies' displays to learn what they manufacture or what services they provide, the skills and training required for each job at the company, and the kinds of jobs they have. Each company display will be manned by a representative to explain and answer questions.

The goal of the program for the students is to make sure they are aware of what is available in their own community, and the skills and education needed for them to be able to work for one of these companies. The seventh grade was chosen as the best age in which to present this program, as what they learn can be used the following year when they start preparing their

high school schedule of classes. With knowledge of what is at stake, it is hoped that students properly prepare for their future, whether it be college or a vocational program.

The Foundation is using this event, in part, as a way to answer industry's cries for help in finding workers with proper job skills, and at the same time, engaging students in what opportunities their home communities can offer if they have the skills employers need. According to Foundation Executive Director, Charles Weaver, "We are excited to have this opportunity to showcase our local industry. We hope this event will make what they do here more readily apparent to people in the county and surrounding areas, and in this case, especially to the seventh graders who will someday be working for these companies."

As part of the days' events, a prospectus luncheon will be held to highlight this year's happenings and accomplishments at the Foundation, to recognize American Oak Preserving Company for 100 years in business this year, and to present the annual Robert E. Hamilton Award, an annual award that is named in honor of the Starke County banker who was instrumental in the creation of the Foundation, that is awarded to a person who has contributed greatly to economic development in Starke County, Indiana. This year's recipient of the Robert E. Hamilton Award is William Sonnemaker, past president of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation. This year's keynote speaker will be Dennis Wimer, Associate Chief Operating Officer of Indiana Department of Workforce Development.

ABOUT SCEDF

The Starke County Economic Development Foundation is a not-for-profit local economic development organization (LEDO) providing economic development opportunities on behalf of Starke County, Indiana, the City of Knox, and the Towns of North Judson and Hamlet through the development of industrial parks, rail spurs, greenfield sites, shovel-ready sites, infrastructure and workforce development. For more information regarding the Starke County Economic Development Foundation, visit www.scedf.biz.

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