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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**STARKE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION SPONSORS**

**2016 MANUFACTURERS DAY EVENT**

**Starke County, Indiana** – The Starke County Economic Development Foundation (SCEDF), in partnership with Oregon-Davis School Corporation, North Judson-San Pierre School Corporation, Culver School Corporation, and Knox Community School Corporation, is holding their annual Manufacturers Day celebration on Thursday, October 13. During the day, the Foundation will host approximately 350 7<sup>th</sup> grade students from all four school corporations at the Knox Middle School. Many area industries including Knox Fertilizer, Traffic Control Specialists, American Oak, Kemin Food Technologies, MPI, Kruz Inc., Metro Recycling, Thermo Products, Knox Water and Wastewater Departments, as well as SCILL, will have displays showing what their companies manufacture, the skills and training required for each job within the company, and the kinds of jobs they have at their companies. The displays will be manned by company representatives to explain and answer questions.

This year's theme is "Tools for Success." Students are given a puzzle to complete during their tour, which will require some knowledge about the presenting companies. As each student goes from booth to booth, they will complete the puzzle. They will learn what each company manufactures, who they sell their products to and for what use, what types of jobs are available in their company, and most importantly, what job skills and education are necessary to secure employment at the company. At the conclusion of the tour, the student will receive a "goodie bag" that includes items for them to take home, that are based on the theme, as well as a brochure highlighting SCILL and each of the industries they visited.

The goal of this program is to make sure that students are aware of what is available in their home counties, and the skills and education it will take for them to be able to work for one of these companies in the future. The 7th grade was chosen as the best age to present this program to, 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 or going straight into the local workforce.

This event is now in its fourth year and has proven to be well received by all who have participated. 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 community can provide if they have the skills employers need. According to Foundation Executive Director Charles W. 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 in this case, especially to the 7<sup>th</sup> graders who will someday be working for these companies. The cooperation of the four school corporations has once again been amazing and we look forward to another successful event this year."

#### **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](http://www.scedf.biz).

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