

*For Immediate Release*

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Fay-Penn Celebrates 2018 Accomplishments, Provides Glimpse of 2019, at Annual Event**

Fay-Penn Economic Development Council is celebrating its 2018 accomplishments tonight, May 02, 2019, at its annual fundraising event at Lakeside Venues in McClellandtown. Some upcoming 2019 highlights will also be featured. About 150 attendees are expected, including elected officials and business leaders.

Jim Foutz, Fay-Penn board chair, is the Master of Ceremonies. The program for the evening includes the following announcements/topics:

#### 2018 Recap:

- 19 unique Fay-Penn projects, resulting in 663 jobs created/retained and over \$22 million in new business investment.
- A \$200,000 investment to develop the Fayette Launchbox business accelerator in conjunction with Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus, and the Invent Penn State initiative. The Launchbox provides co-working space and business support for local entrepreneurs. Two start-ups are currently using the Launchbox.
- 39 scholarships awarded through Fay-Penn's Orville and Ruth Eberly Workforce Development Fund, which provides assistance to students pursuing careers in skilled trade or technical vocations.
- 14 internships funded at local small businesses.
- 9 graduates from the third cohort of the Fayette Leaders Academy, run in conjunction with Penn State Fayette.
- 10 business training events, workshops, seminars, and trade shows, including the 5<sup>th</sup> annual "Bankers' Breakfast" and the launching of the 1<sup>st</sup> annual "Growbiz" business assistance expo.
- 36 business activities hosted by the newly christened "FNB Business Event Center" located within the Fay-Penn headquarters building.



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#### 2019 Announcements:

- Signed option agreements with a solar energy company that is pursuing development of two solar farms in Fayette County. Each farm will ultimately produce approximately 25,000 MWh annually when functional, enough to power 4,600 average homes. (1 home = 10.76 MWh annually)
- The hard launch of a new Fay-Penn website at [www.faypenn.org](http://www.faypenn.org), which concentrates on the business attractiveness of Fayette County and serves as the foundation of a new Fay-Penn marketing campaign to attract business investment from outside the County.
- Projections of over 250 new jobs through 2020 based on current ongoing Fay-Penn projects.

#### Fayette Leaders Academy Graduation:

- Dr. Charles Patrick, Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer at Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus, will announce the 2018-2019 graduating cohort, the program's fourth graduating class.
  - Nicole Brosky, PNC Bank
  - Mary Budinsky, Penn State Fayette
  - Tre' Coles, Penn State Fayette
  - Mary Conn, Somerset Trust
  - Amanda Cuteri, Office of PA Representative Matt Dowling
  - Benjamin Kisiel, Kisiel & Associates
  - Derek Marucci, ContactUS
  - Doud Sanner, Ford Business Machines
  - Kendall Sisler, Michael Polito Salon
  - Brandi Vandusen, The Caring Mission
  - Barbara Velosky, Columbia Gas
  - Renee Witt, Ohiopyle Prints
- The cohort will announce the ribbon-cutting for its community service project, the renovation of a classroom within The East End Community Center in Uniontown. The event is set for May 17, 2019, at 10:00 AM.
- Patrick will announce the community service project for the 2019-2020 cohort that is now forming. "Project management skills are honed by identifying, developing, and executing a community service project. The next cohort will vary somewhat in that they will work on a pre-defined project: Creating a "Vision 2020" strategic plan for organizing and enabling all of our young talent in Fayette County to give them a greater say in how Fayette County moves into the future. The project will involve surveying and benchmarking, focus groups, organizational development, outreach to established leaders, and a launch event. The targeted project outcome is to create a long-term, local system of actively engaging more of our young talent to use their energy, vitality, and skills for Fayette County's progress, and to create an environment that entices them to stay here. This project will dovetail with a similar, regional effort being organized by the Allegheny Conference on Community Development out of Pittsburgh."

Fay-Penn's annual Eberly Economic Development Award:

- Foutz will announce Fairchance Construction as the 2019 Eberly Economic Development Award winner. Mr. Ed Balling, Fairchance Construction President, will accept the award and provide remarks. Fay-Penn annually presents the Eberly Economic Development Award to recognize influential individuals, companies, or agencies that exhibit leadership in significantly contributing to the economic development successes of Fayette County. The award is named for Robert E. Eberly, a well-known philanthropist who founded Fay-Penn and was influential in the development of other Fayette County pillar organizations such as The Eberly Foundation and the Community Foundation of Fayette County. Mr. Eberly's remarkable record of leadership and unwavering desire to make Fayette County a better place were exemplified by his generosity, community spirit, and dedication to excellence. Fay-Penn selects Award recipients by focusing on their impact in one or more of the following areas:
  - Establishing a business
  - Expanding a business
  - Attracting business (e.g., via tourism)
  - Creating or retaining jobs
  - Generating public or private investment
  - Innovations in attracting or developing our workforce
  - Enhancing the local quality of life
  - Promoting a supportive environment for business

All profits from the event are targeted toward Fay-Penn's workforce initiatives. Fundraising goals for the event include:

- \$7500 towards the Orville and Ruth Eberly Workforce Development Fund managed by the Community Foundation of Fayette County (CFFC). The CFFC will match that amount with \$2500. Since the Fund was established in 2014, 110 scholarships totaling \$55,000 have been awarded.
- \$7500 toward a new "Internship and Apprenticeship" Fund to be launched at the CFFC.
- \$2600 for two scholarships for the Fayette Leaders Academy, one each to the two young professionals groups in Fayette County.

Fay-Penn's event also will include a "Networking Challenge" for attendees to meet new people. Each attendee will be given a token and challenged to find three other attendees with identical tokens, and to learn at least one thing about everyone in their group. Successful teams will be entered for prize drawings.

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**Fay-Penn is a non-profit organization dedicated to the economic growth of Fayette County. For additional information regarding the above event please contact Bob Shark at 724-437-7913, ext 211.**