

# ThriveED Launches Business Retention and Expansion Program in Dodge County

*Program will provide focused support to existing Dodge County primary employers*

## Media Contact:

Victoria Pratt, President, Thrive Economic Development  
920-674-8710 | [victoriap@thriveed.org](mailto:victoriap@thriveed.org)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jefferson, Wis., June 14, 2019 – Thrive Economic Development (ThriveED) announced Friday that it will launch a Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program in Dodge County that will drive economic growth through focused support of existing primary industry sector Dodge County businesses.

An effective BRE program builds relationships with existing employers to better understand the challenges and opportunities they face. Information gathered in confidential interviews often reveals opportunities for businesses to tap into assistance or incentives previously unknown to them.

ThriveED provides economic development services to Dodge and Jefferson counties. Through conversations with Dodge County leadership, it was clear that implementing an effective BRE program would require additional staff and resources.

“At more than 900 square miles, Dodge County is a lot of ground to cover,” noted ThriveED President Vicki Pratt, CECD. “We determined that Dodge County businesses would be best served by the addition of an experienced professional with existing familiarity of the county and its diverse business base, and who was also willing to work on a consultant basis.”

ThriveED is bringing Steve Jenkins, CECD, on board to implement the BRE program. Jenkins most recently served as the president and CEO of the Sandoval Economic Alliance in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. This opportunity represents a return to Wisconsin for Jenkins, who was president of the Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation (now Envision Greater Fond du Lac) from 2012 through mid-2017.

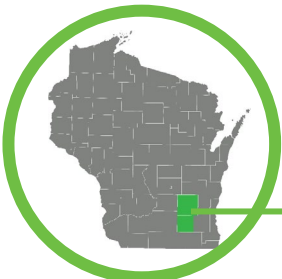
“Business retention and expansion is the foundation of economic development,” said Pratt. “While attracting a new business to a community attracts headlines and fanfare, the most effective way to ensure our economic growth is to support the businesses that already call Dodge County home.”

“We know businesses have choices when it comes to where they will invest and hire,” noted Russell Kottke, Chair of the Dodge County Board of Supervisors. “A focused commitment to business retention and expansion will help us support businesses that have invested in Dodge County.”

“We are excited to launch this program and welcome Steve back to Wisconsin,” he added.

In addition to his roles in Fond du Lac and Sandoval, Jenkins has also held leadership roles in economic development organizations in several other states, including Kansas, Texas, Missouri, Colorado and Louisiana.

“When businesses thrive, communities thrive,” noted Jenkins. “I know firsthand how effective a robust BRE program can be and I look forward to connecting with Dodge County employers.”



864 Collins Rd. Suite 111 | Jefferson, WI 53549 | 920-674-8711 | [thriveED.org](http://thriveED.org)

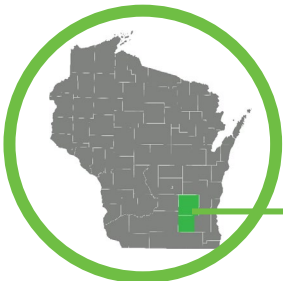


The BRE program will focus on primary employers in Dodge County, with a focus on industry clusters that are especially strong in the county, including manufacturing, food processing and agribusiness.

### **About Thrive Economic Development**

Thrive Economic Development is a non-profit 501(c)3 public-private organization created to promote the economic competitiveness of the Jefferson and Dodge County region by providing professional economic development services for the purpose of retaining, expanding and attracting capital investments and driver industry jobs to our communities. It was formed in mid-2016 and engages the private sector in economic development activities.

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