

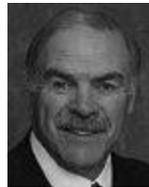
# Will County Center for Economic Development celebrates 40 years of supporting local businesses



Ed Dollinger



Bob Filotto



Jim Roof

Against a backdrop of a high cost of capital and one of the most severe unemployment rates in the nation, local business leaders stepped forward with a vision to make a change that would set the region on a new economic path. Pooling their own funds, they created the Will County Center for Economic Development, a private nonprofit development organization, in 1981.

Throughout the past 40 years, the CED has been a strategic partner for new and existing businesses in Will County. Through volunteer engagement and financial support from public and private sector leaders, and collaboration with local, state and federal elected officials, the CED has fostered a cooperative environment contributing to the revitalization and growth of the region.

“The CED impacted my business by allowing access to resources and influential business leaders who care about the future of Will County,” said Ed Dollinger, principal with Edward Jones. “But for the CED, my business would not be where it is today.”

Bob Filotto, owner of Filotto Professional Services, concurred. “I have been extremely fortunate to be a member of the CED Board since 1986. I have had the privilege of working alongside inspiring individuals from diverse industries, united to improve the

quality of life in the County.”

In addition to providing a forum for leaders to work together, several accomplishments can be attributed in part to the CED, including Will County’s status as home to the largest inland port in the nation.

But the work of the CED is not finished.

New jobs and businesses require innovative technology. Workers must be equipped to perform the jobs of the future.

Business growth requires solid infrastructure, vibrant communities, sensible regulations, strong educational systems, affordable housing, and diverse cultural and recreational options. As we look to the next 40 years, the CED remains at the forefront of these issues.

“It is often said that the economic viability of a community is a mirror which reflects the efforts of those individuals in leadership positions who are committed to making a difference.

That commitment is what has made, and continues to make, the CED a true economic development force – countywide and in the metro Chicago region,” said Jim Roof, First Midwest Bank senior vice president.

Collectively, these former CED board chairmen – Dollinger, Filotto and Roof – strongly encourage business leaders to get involved in the CED. Together, we can ensure Will County is a great place to live, work and play – today and tomorrow.