



**LAKE COUNTY PARTNERS CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF LEADING THE  
INNOVATION ECONOMY AT 2018 BIG EVENT**

***More than 500 Lake County Leaders Gather to Recognize the Organization's Important Role  
in Local Economic Development***

**Lincolnshire, Illinois, June 1, 2018** — Lake County Partners brought together 500 business and civic leaders to celebrate 20 years of driving economic growth in Lake County at its annual “Big Event” on Friday, June 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Big Event focuses on giving companies and communities the latest tools that they need to fuel economic development, and this year’s focus was on business growth and innovation. Keynote speaker Robert Safian, the former Editor at *Fast Company* magazine and current Editor and Managing Director of The Flux Group, presented five important best practices that businesses can incorporate to remain competitive and relevant in times of transition. “The old rules of business don’t apply anymore,” Safian informed the audience. “It’s not the strongest of the species that survives. It’s the one that’s most adaptable to change.”

The notion of resilience underscored a program that both looked towards the future and gave a nod to the past, with many taking the opportunity to commemorate Lake County Partners’ rich history. “Lake County Partners has been fortunate to have the strong support of a talented group of leaders over the years, and they have been instrumental in ensuring that we can continue to help businesses thrive here,” said Lake County Partners’ president and CEO Kevin Considine.

Lake County Board Member Chuck Bartels, one of Lake County Partners’ founding members and a current Lake County Partners Board Member, concurred, “Even after 20 years, it’s still exciting to be in a room filled with supporters of the organization, knowing that we’ve been able to work together to meet the needs of the business community and fulfill Lake County Partners’ mission to drive growth, nurture talent and support economic development in Lake County.”

Through the “Lake County Workforce Ecosystem” established in recent years, Lake County Partners has strategically teamed with Lake County Workforce Development, the College of Lake County, the Lake County High Schools Technology Campus and others to meet with company leaders, identify and address critical marketplace needs and help source talent. One company that has taken full advantage of the services offered through the Workforce Ecosystem, HydraForce, Inc. a Lincolnshire-based manufacturer of the highest quality hydraulic cartridge valves, manifolds and electro-hydraulic controls for the heavy equipment and material handling industries, was presented with the inaugural Lake County Workforce Ecosystem Talent Innovator Award at The Big Event in recognition of the company’s exemplary workforce development strategies.

“It was a pleasure to attend The Big Event and receive this award,” said Robyn Safron,

HydraForce's Human Resources Manager. "With nearly 1,000 local employees, we've experienced tremendous growth in Lake County, and so we've benefited from working with the partners in the Workforce Ecosystem to plug into varied career events and programs that have helped us find the highly-skilled employees we need."

Richard Korengold, Lake County Partners Board Chairman and Senior Managing Director with Mesirow Financial Wealth Advisors, noted "Each year, The Big Event gives Lake County Partners the opportunity to recommit to its goal to help businesses succeed. Stories, like those that we heard from HydraForce today, demonstrate the importance of the Workforce Ecosystem. Because of the partnership, we have seen groundbreaking initiatives with outcomes such as robust training and employment programs, job placements, career fairs, internship opportunities and business expansions and relocations. As I looked out over the sea of supporters, I had no doubt that we just set the stage for another remarkable 20 years of economic development in Lake County."

Event attendees also gathered insights from an economic outlook delivered by Sumit L. Desai, CFA, Vice President and Director of Research for Mesirow Financial Wealth Advisors and a nationally-recognized commentator on economic trends. Aaron Lawlor, the Lake County Board Chair and a Lake County Partners Board Member, delved into the insights and discussed how they affect the day-to-day lives of people across the county.

"As we celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lake County Partners, it's an exciting time to reflect on where we've been and where we are going," remarked Lawlor. "Lake County Partners has forged strong relationships and assembled the tools that businesses need, cementing Lake County's status as a premier place for business. As the name suggests, this event is always a good reminder that we need to be thinking bigger. That's why in addition to supporting local companies, we're also working with leaders in the region to grow our global outreach efforts. I'm looking forward to seeing Lake County's continued success in the years to come."

The Big Event is made possible with generous support from the Lake County business community including First Midwest Bank, Lake County, Mesirow Financial, CIBC, Comcast Business, Innovation Park Lake County, Horizon Pharma, the College of Lake County, a5 Branding & Digital, Aerotek, Baxter, BMO Harris Bank, CBRE, Chuck Bartels, ComEd, General Mitchell International Airport, Great Lakes Construction Association, HydraForce, Inc., Libertyville Bank and Trust, Loyola University Chicago, Manpower, Sysmex, United Conveyor Corporation, Van Vliissingen and Co., Walgreens and Five Grain Events.

### **About Lake County Partners**

Lake County Partners is a 501(c)(3) economic development corporation that works to maintain economic vitality in Lake County, Illinois by creating and retaining quality jobs, stimulating capital investment, and pursuing economic diversity. Lake County promises businesses a highly-educated workforce, beautiful and diverse recreational areas, a gateway to global markets, the right balance between work and play, top-ranking schools nationwide, world-class healthcare in your backyard, global industry leaders, and first-rate quality of life.

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