



SWITZERLAND COUNTY  
economic development corporation

## **NEW SWITZERLAND COUNTY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER OF RISING SUN TO COLLABORATE ON COLLEGE AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS**

*For Immediate Release*

*April 3, 2012*

The new Switzerland County Community Learning Center and the Community Learning Center of Rising Sun have agreed to work together to serve the residents of Southeast Indiana's two smallest counties.

The Switzerland County learning center will be located at the new county building currently under construction at 708 W. Seminary Street in Vevay. The facility will contain two adult classrooms, a computer lab, a distance education lab, a conference room. Space has also been planned for an industrial training and certification lab

The Education Center of Rising Sun is located directly in front of the Rising Star Casino Resort at 591 Smart Drive in Rising Sun. It also contains classrooms and a computer lab, and shares office space with the Community Foundation of Rising Sun.

The two learning centers will collaborate on marketing their programs to the residents of both counties, will work to avoid duplication of services, and will share information about demand for certification programs and college courses.

Both counties participate in the regional EcO15 initiative, a multi-year program funded by the Lilly Endowment that covers 10 counties in Southeast Indiana. EcO15 seeks to connect residents to opportunities in manufacturing, health care, and tourism with the educational requirements needed to obtain high-paying jobs in these fields. In Switzerland County, the EcO15 initiative is overseen by The Community Foundation of Switzerland County and the Switzerland County Economic Development Corporation. The SCEDC administers the program, which is managed by Mike Busch. The Community Foundation of Rising Sun administers EcO15 in Ohio County, and is managed by Debbie Thomason.

“This partnership with Ohio County is one of several that will be created to better serve Switzerland County residents,” said Jon Bond, president of the SCEDC. Discussions have taken place over the last two years with other educational facilities in anticipation of the Switzerland County Community Learning Center’s opening in a few months.

“Switzerland and Ohio Counties both have great needs and limited resources for adult education”, said Debbie Thomason. “The community leaders in both counties expect us to be creative and efficient. Sharing information about our resident’s needs and working together to make each county’s programs available to each other is one way to do that.”

“Both communities share a lot more than just being close neighbors”, said Mike Busch. “The START (Skills, Tasks, and Results Training) certification program offered in Rising Sun attracts residents from Switzerland County looking to enter the hospitality industry. START program graduates are guaranteed an interview with Belterra Resort and Casino. Both communities have benefited from participation in the EcO15 initiative. And both communities have an established relationship with Vincennes University, which we all expect to see growing”.

In 2008, Switzerland County citizens met to discuss priorities for using the \$600,000 in EcO15 grant funds in the community. Adult lifelong learning opportunities were one of the top three priorities identified.

The Switzerland County Community Learning Center will open this summer after construction on the Seminary Street facility is completed.