

Youngstown/Warren, Ohio: Poised for Success after Years of Decline

Have you heard about what's happening in the greater Youngstown/Warren, Ohio, area? You'd be surprised at how different the area is from its past image. Here are just 10 examples of what's going on in the Youngstown/Warren area that should change perceptions of this community.



1. One of the best places to start a business: The top 10 communities in the U.S. to start a business, according to the August 2009 *Entrepreneur* magazine, included the usual economic hot spots, Las Vegas, Atlanta, San Diego and Chapel Hill, N.C. But right there among the top 10 was Youngstown. The factors in ranking Youngstown so high: young, dynamic political leaders and exciting and thriving tech ventures like Turning Technologies and the Youngstown Business Incubator.



GM Lordstown Complex

2. GM's top assembly plant: Plans for the New General Motors include large expectations for the GM Lordstown Complex, located a few miles northwest of Youngstown. The plant is now the largest GM production facility in the U.S. and produced more cars for GM, by far, than any other U.S. plant in 2008. GM is in the process of spending \$350 million at Lordstown to prepare for production of its new, fuel-efficient car, the Cruze, which will go into production in 2010. Efforts by labor and management working together in an unprecedented spirit of cooperation helped the Valley to retain one of its largest employers.

3. Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber – A catalyst for renewed economic development: More and more companies are taking a look at and deciding to locate in the Mahoning Valley, assisted by the Valley's economic development engine, the Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber. The Chamber's economic development team is led by Walter Good, 45, vice president for business expansion and retention, and Eric Planey, 36, a former international banker and the Chamber's vice president for national and international business attraction.



- In 2009, the Youngstown-Warren metro area, for the first time ever, made *Site Selection* magazine's top 10 list for business attraction, retention and expansion.

- The Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber also received the top award in the Business Attraction category at Team Northeast Ohio's (NEO) *Inside Business* magazine's 2009 Economic Development Impact Awards. The award recognized the Chamber's efforts to attract a steel-related company to Mahoning County. Republic Special Metals is building a \$64 million, state-of-the-art specialty steel production complex in North Jackson, west of Youngstown.

- V&M Star, which employs about 500 workers at its tube-making plant in Youngstown, is considering an \$800 million expansion that would create another 500 jobs.

- In the last 10 years, the Regional Chamber has assisted in bringing 16,000 new jobs to the Valley.

2009 Top Metros by Number of Projects

Rank	Metro	State(s)	Count
1	Metropolitan Denver	Colorado	109
2	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington	Texas	98
3	Chicago	Ill.	94
4	Phoenix	Ariz./Pa.	88
5	New York-Newark-Jersey City	N.Y./N.J./Pa.	87
6	New York-Newark	N.Y.	86
7	San Francisco	Calif.	85
8	San Jose	Calif.	84
9	Cleveland	Ohio	83
10	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria	D.C./Va.	80

Metros with population 200,000 to 1 million

Rank	Metro	State(s)	Count
1	Dayton	Ohio	41
2	Akron	Ohio	39
3	Toledo	Ohio	38
4	Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton	Pa./N.J.	29
5	Des Moines	Iowa	28
6	Grand Rapids-Wyoming	Mich.	27
7	Greensboro-High Point	N.C.	24
7	Tulsa	Okl.	24
7	Youngstown-Warren-Boardman	Ohio/Pa.	24
10	Omaha-Council Bluffs	Neb./Iowa	23



Taft Technology Center, Home of Turning Technologies

4. High-tech center: It's a dream story for an unlikely community. Turning Technologies, a maker of audience response technology and one of the fastest growing software companies in the U.S., is anchored in a brand new building in the "tech block" in downtown Youngstown. The company grew from three employees to about 150 employees, quickly lacked space in its new facility and expanded into an adjacent, newly renovated building. Turning Technologies is among a cluster of tech companies and start-ups in downtown Youngstown that is being billed by some as the Silicon Valley of the Rust Belt.

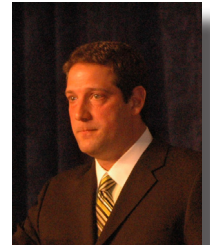
5. Young Local Leadership: Elected leaders like U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan, Youngstown Mayor Jay Williams and State Sen. Capri Cafaro are changing the perceptions of what a Mahoning Valley politician can be.

- **Tim Ryan**, at 35 years old, is a member of the House leadership team and the powerful House Appropriations Committee. He is one of the leaders of the Cleveland-Youngstown-Pittsburgh Tech Belt initiative. His work has garnered the attention of the national media and earned him appearances on CNN, NBC, CBS, ABC Evening News, Fox News and National Public Radio.



Williams

- **Jay Williams**, 37, the first African-American mayor of Youngstown and its youngest ever, is much acclaimed for his out-of-the box approach to trying to solve the enormous problems facing the city of Youngstown. In 2007, Williams was the recipient of the 2007 John F. Kennedy New Frontier Award, given each year by the The JFK Library Foundation to two exceptional young Americans under the age of 40 whose contributions in elective office, community service or advocacy demonstrate the impact and value of public service in the spirit of President John F. Kennedy.
- **Capri Cafaro**, 30, an heir to the Cafaro Co. shopping mall empire, is serving just her third year in the Ohio Senate. In January, she was sworn in as Senate Minority Leader, the first leader in the Ohio General Assembly from the Mahoning Valley in nearly 20 years.



Ryan



Cafaro

6. Youngstown 2010: This innovative "shrinking city" plan has caught the attention of urban specialists and the media all over the world. It is considered a model plan for communities dealing with population loss and blight.

7. Cleveland-Youngstown-Pittsburgh Tech Belt: The Tech Belt Initiative is an economic development strategy designed to reinvigorate the region by building on its unique civic, educational, healthcare and industrial institutions. Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley sit at the center of this initiative, which covers an inter-state region of 7.2 million people that would be the fourth largest industrial/technology region nationally, with a potential economic impact of more than \$1 billion in annual academic R&D.

8. Youngstown State University: Under the leadership of Dr. David Sweet, the university has seen its enrollment increase more in the last few years than any other public college or university in the state of Ohio, and its campus is expanding by leaps and bounds. A new \$34 million Williamson College of Business Administration is currently under construction and will link the university with downtown Youngstown.



Youngstown State University

9. Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative: This organization, funded by the Raymond John Wean Foundation, is working on grassroots neighborhood revitalization action plans for the cities of Youngstown and Warren that promise to be models for the nation.

10. Downtown Resurgence: Downtown Youngstown has seen a startling change in the last five years from a decaying business district to a bustling downtown entertainment and business center with a new arena, office buildings, restaurants and retail shops. In addition, a demand for downtown residential living has resulted in new apartments being built in a former downtown office building. The city of Warren has initiated the Main Street Warren program to revitalize its downtown, as well, and is planning a new business incubator that will center on green energy initiatives.