

## May 31, 2008 - Showcase Event Brings Big Business News, Jobs

The Altoona Mirror

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Showcase event brings big business news, jobs

By David Hurst

May 31, 2008

JOHNSTOWN &mdash; Showcase for Commerce again was big business for CambriaCounty.

Local leaders announced contracts Friday totaling about \$115 million in work, promising dozens of new jobs.

When MTS Technologies moves into its new Johnstown Tech Park home in November, there will be plenty of work to do.

The company landed \$27.6 million in contracts from the Army to provide support on two projects &mdash; work that company President and Chief Executive Officer Dan Perkins said will add 30 jobs to its Johnstown work force.

The company already has announced plans to move its Johnstown offices into the under-construction, three-story tech park site next year, eventually giving it room to employ 150 &mdash; something Perkins says shouldn't be far off.

The Army deal calls for MTS to provide medical operational support and help develop new ways to track and handle war wounds with the Naval ResearchCenter.

The company also will help the Army in a project aimed at better preparing ground fighters in close combat.

'&rsquo;We're here because of the work ethic and the cost of doing business,' said Perkins, a Johnstown native.

Other business leaders echoed those sentiments often Friday. Of course, ovations also went to U.S. Rep. John P. Murtha, D-12th District, the veteran congressman and Defense Appropriations Committee chairman who brought the first Showcase to town 18 years ago.

“This kind of thing doesn’t happen overnight; these contracts don’t happen overnight,” said Murtha, who said many of the contracts announced this week were the result of networking at last year’s Showcase.

The largest contract — a five-year, \$45 million deal — went to Concurrent Technologies Corp., which will research, test and develop ways to better transfer data and important information to troops on the battlefield, CTC President Daniel R. DeVos said.

Satellite communications have become a vital part of modern warfare, he added, “and information needs to be sent so soldiers can use it in real time.”

Among other news:

AeroFab Inc., a Nicktown-based company, was awarded a five-year, \$5 million contract from The Boeing Co. to build sheet metal parts for the helicopter like V-22 Osprey powerlift aircraft. AeroFab’s Joe Phillips said the work will mean new equipment and new people at the northern Cambria County facility, adding three or four people to his 35-person work force.

Kuchera Defense Systems was awarded \$26.7 million in jobs from defense giant Raytheon — most of it to continue the advanced to medium range air-to-air Missile program. That work — plus a smaller contract to manufacture electronic components for a precision-guided missile — will add 12 jobs.

Radant Technologies and Johnstown Welding and Fabrication will work together to pursue a major Air Force program, which could mean \$10 million for JWF’s defense sector during the life of the program.

CTC also was awarded a \$287,000 contract with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service to streamline its business processes with electronic invoicing.

Kuchera also was awarded a \$1.6 million contract from defense giant Raytheon to continue manufacturing transmitter components for the company’s Seasparrow Missile, a medium-range surface-to-air system used to destroy aircraft, anti-ship missiles and other platforms.

L. Robert Kimball & Associates and the University of Pittsburgh Diabetes

Institute will team up to analyze diabetes in the 12th Congressional District, where cases are far above average. The group will study environmental, lifestyle and other factors and is expected to have a final report in December.

Perhaps the biggest news came from Lockheed Martin Corp. before the Showcase officially began. The Bethesda, Md.-based defense contractor is moving a Global Supply Chain Services business to Richland Township and relocating 100 jobs there. Within three years, that number is expected to hit 135 &mdash; with the average worker earning \$60,000 annually, officials said.