



**OhioSE**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



**Press Release:** For Immediate Release

### **Top Projects Recognized at Annual API/OhioSE Summit**

**Athens, Ohio** —Appalachian Partnership, Inc., and Ohio Southeast Economic Development (OhioSE) recognized the best of the best during their 2023 Annual Summit held inside the Baker Center on the campus of Ohio University.

OhioSE, the JobsOhio network partner serving 25 rural counties in southern, eastern and southeastern Ohio, had a near-record year in 2022, recording 46 project wins. Those projects will bring 1,238 new jobs to the region and will trigger more than \$265 million in fixed asset capital investment.

The four projects recognized were selected as the best of 2022. Nominations for this recognition were made by local economic development professionals from throughout the region along with members of the OhioSE team. Votes then were cast to determine the winners.

“The projects recognized were quite different in size and scope, but all have an important part in improving the OhioSE region’s quality of life and economic vitality,” said Mike Jacoby, OhioSE president.

The Best Project of 2022 Award went to Bellisio Foods, based in Jackson. The project, which includes new manufacturing equipment, building expansion and renovations, and increased employee wages, represents the third major investment Bellisio has made in its Jackson facility during the last eight years.

Bellisio Foods was founded by Jeno Paulucci, who started Chun King and Jeno’s Pizza Rolls. Originally named Michelina’s Foods, Bellisio was purchased by CP Foods, a Thailand-based conglomerate with operations in 14 countries.

“New capital investment and continued job creation are critical to retaining and expanding our region’s base of large employers,” said Katy Farber, OhioSE vice president. “Bellisio is one of the long-time anchors of the OhioSE region.

“As the second largest employer in our region, Bellisio continues to provide innovative programs for its employees as well as being a leader in supporting Jackson and surrounding communities.”

The Caldwell East of I-77 Business Park in Noble County earned the Best Site or Building Project Award. The 60-acre park is located a mile from Interstate 77 Exit 25 near Caldwell and includes the development of six construction-ready pads and an initial 10,000-square-foot speculative building.

“Having ready development sites and industrial buildings is vital to the continued growth of our region,” Farber said. “We need inventory to enable regional companies to expand and to attract new companies with job creating projects.

“Coordinated by The Ohio State University Extension—Noble County Community Development program with support from the Belmont County Port Authority, the Noble team worked to create a business park project reflective of the realities of a rural, topographically challenged county.

“This truly was a team effort by a variety of local, public and private partners. The Noble County commissioners were involved in addition to the Village of Caldwell, Olive Township trustees, the Noble County Community Improvement Corporation, and Crock Construction, the local developer.”

The JobsOhio Site Improvement Program and the OhioSE Due Diligence funding contributed nearly \$2.4 million to move the project forward. The anticipated completion date is December of 2023.

“This was the first project in Noble County to receive JobsOhio funding,” Farber pointed out. “JO now has provided assistance to all 88 of Ohio’s counties.

“Not since the 1950s has Noble County had such an announcement, but the belief that the circumstances of a distressed rural county could change with collaboration and partnerships led the way.”

The River Roasters Coffee Company, based in Pomeroy, was presented with the Best JobsOhio Inclusion Grant Project. The company started in 2018 on a shoestring budget, revived a historic building and survived an Ohio River flood prior to opening.

Its new production facility, which became operational in 2022, allows River Roasters to supply its locally roasted coffee, granola and favorite foods to restaurants, institutions, groceries and other coffee shops in multiple states. River Roasters Coffee is a leader in the emerging and growing food products industry in Meigs County, which includes the Snowville Creamery, The Baked Goods Company, Herbal Sage Teams and the Mad Batter Cookie Company.

The company’s new facility was supported by a JobsOhio Inclusion Grant, which provides financial support for eligible projects in distressed communities and/or for businesses owned by underrepresented populations like minorities, women, veterans and people with disabilities.

“So often, we focus on the large investment and job creating projects as having the most impact on our region,” Farber said. “It is equally important to have our smaller, privately held companies expand and prosper. This is exactly why the JobsOhio Inclusion Grant was established.

“Company owners Larry, a military veteran, and Candice Hess recently were recognized at the JobsOhio Board of Directors meeting for their commitment to the region and are a prime example of why supporting our small but growing businesses is so vitally important for our region.”

The Best Community Development Project of 2022 went to Hotel McArthur in Vinton County.

The Vinton County Convention and Visitor's Bureau purchased the historic Hotel McArthur building, constructed in 1839, and is planning a \$2.6 million renovation to restore the hotel to look as it would have in its heyday years of 1840-1920. Some modern amenities will be added to the building and plans call for space to be occupied by the Vinton County Visitor Center. A bar and restaurant will be located directly past the hotel lobby and two office suites will be created. Guest rooms in the hotel will be themed and named for local historic sites and persons.

The hotel renovation is expected to be funded by a grant through the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Mineral Resources Management's Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization program.

"We need downtowns in our communities to be vital with amenities to support those of us who live and work in the region as well as those who are visiting," Farber noted. "It indeed is a pleasure for OhioSE to salute this exciting project that is poised to transform McArthur, the county seat in Vinton County."

In addition to the awards presented by OhioSE, Appalachian Growth Capital also recognized three businesses from the region.

Bryan Stepp, chairman of the AGC board, recognized Zanesville Steel, based in Zanesville, Buckeye Mechanical Contracting, located in Jefferson County, and Patriot Stainless and Welding, also located in Zanesville.

The companies were honored for being innovators that have either expanded into new areas related to their core operations or provided a specialty product.

**Contact:** Katy Farber, Vice President, OhioSE; 937.763.6758 and [katy@ohiose.com](mailto:katy@ohiose.com).

**Ohio Southeast Economic Development (OhioSE)** is the JobsOhio Network Partner for southern, eastern, and southeastern Ohio, providing economic development work and resources in 25 rural counties; they are the newest and geographically the largest of the six regions across the state. OhioSE partners closely with regional development districts, local economic development offices, state agencies, and other entities to expand, retain, and attract businesses in the counties they serve. Learn more at [OhioSE.com](http://OhioSE.com).

**Appalachian Partnership, Inc. (API)** is a non-profit organization of CEOs representing businesses and institutions from Ohio's 32 Appalachian-designated counties. Its mission is to increase prosperity for the citizens and businesses residing in our region through the deployment of robust and synergistic economic development strategies. API serves as the parent company to Appalachian Growth Capital and OhioSE. Learn more at [www.Appalachianpartnership.org](http://www.Appalachianpartnership.org).

**Appalachian Growth Capital (AGC)** is a U.S. Treasury federally-certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) in Appalachia Ohio. Its mission is to help small and middle size businesses in the region grow and prosper by providing low cost-loans and technical assistance. Learn more at [www.appcap.org](http://www.appcap.org).

**JobsOhio** is a private nonprofit economic development corporation designed to drive job creation and new capital investment in Ohio through business attraction, retention and expansion. The organization

also works to seed talent production in its targeted industries and to attract talent to Ohio through [Find Your Ohio](#). JobsOhio works with six regional partners across Ohio: [Dayton Development Coalition](#), [Ohio Southeast Economic Development](#), [One Columbus](#), [REDI Cincinnati](#), [Regional Growth Partnership](#) and [Team NEO](#). Learn more at [www.jobsohio.com](http://www.jobsohio.com). Follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

# # #