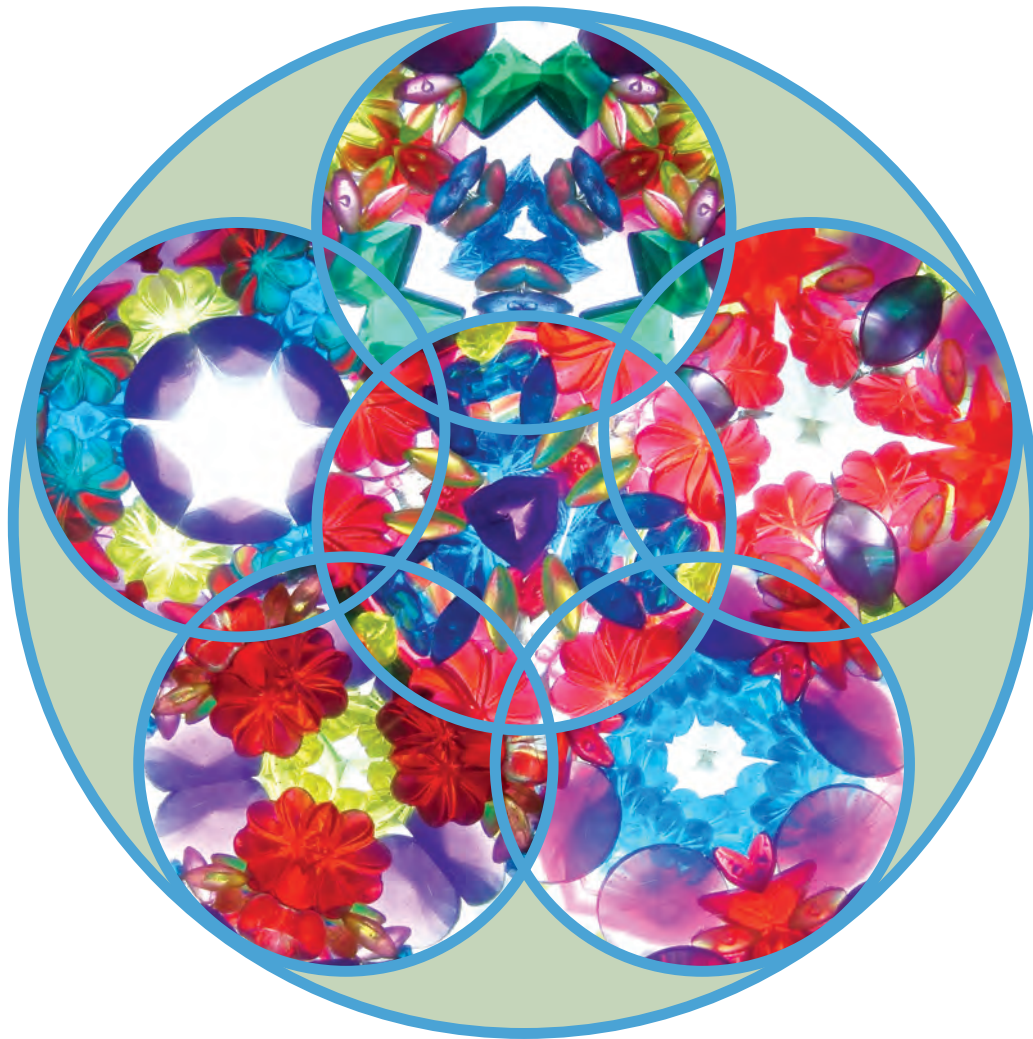


Vision 2015

a progress report to the community 2008-2009



action creates a kaleidoscope of change

what is Vision 2015?

Vision 2015 is a shared public agenda that represents the region's priorities, with specific action steps to achieve those priorities and measure the impact. The vision is more than a plan; it's a call to action that the entire community must own and embrace.

Vision 2015 has always been an intermediary, connecting the dots so that the right people and organizations are identified for the right tasks. But we also have a broader role, bringing leaders and creative thinkers to the table in order to promote systemic, sustainable change.

This past year Vision 2015 has seen change in both the community and the organization, and we continue to be the catalyst for progress by leading, motivating, and engaging partner organizations so that our region remains firmly planted in the winners' circle.

leadership transition

After twelve years of leadership, Michael J. Hammons officially stepped down as President of Vision 2015 on December 31, 2008. Hammons served as the head of Vision 2015 and its predecessor, Forward Quest, since 1996.

John S. Domaschko, a lifelong Northern Kentucky resident and no stranger to the work of Vision 2015, assumed the position of Interim President on January 1, 2009. The smooth and productive leadership transition we have experienced is a testament to the professionalism and expertise of both Mike and John and their commitment to maintaining the momentum to advance the bold initiatives called for in Vision 2015. Vision 2015 is currently in the process of searching for a new president and hopes to have a new leader by the end of the summer.

a word from our chairman

“Over the past year, Vision 2015 has continued to drive the implementation of the bold strategic plan that will make Northern Kentucky a better, more economically competitive place to live and work. In this report are examples of Vision 2015's plan at work, either through a continuation of previous efforts to advance our goals or through new innovative initiatives that are creating expansive solutions to local challenges. Each is driven by community partners who strive to maximize the impact of their work on the community's priorities to reach our aligned goals. As we proudly review these accomplishments, and reflect on our challenges, we are eager to accelerate progress to help Northern Kentucky reach its full potential.”



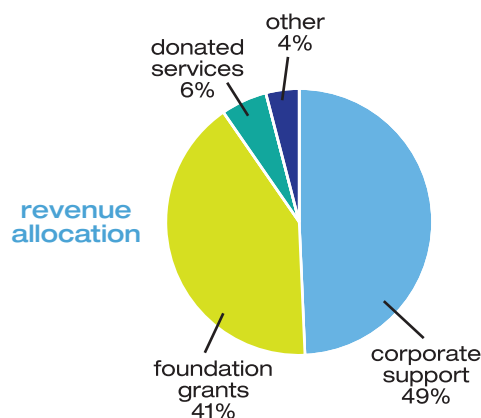
— **Andrew J. (A.J.) Schaeffer**,
Principal, Drug Enhancement Corporation of America



financial report

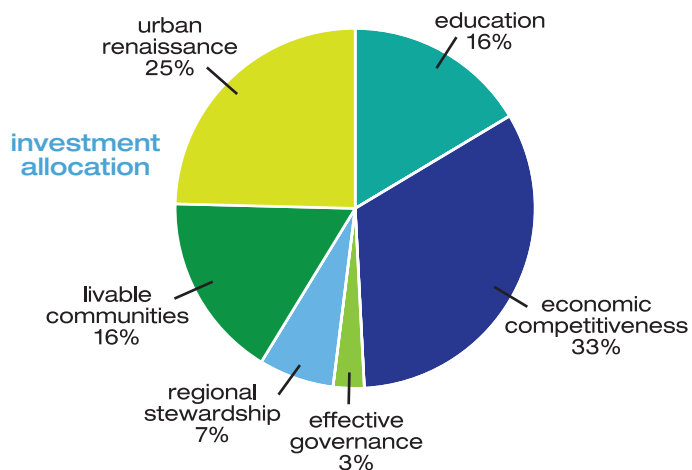
2008-2009 Revenue

revenue sources	
corporate support	\$ 717,300
foundation grants	\$ 597,152
donated services	\$ 81,431
other	\$ 58,697
total	\$ 1,454,580



2008-2009 Investment

initiatives	
education	\$ 156,507
economic competitiveness	\$ 312,284
effective governance	\$ 26,546
regional stewardship	\$ 64,497
livable communities	\$ 158,780
urban renaissance	\$ 234,459
total	\$ 953,073



2008-2009 top community "wins"

- p3** 17.8% of goal reached to create 14,500 primary jobs by 2015
- p3** \$571,099,513 (expected) in economic impact in NKY through the creation of 20 new or expanded business investments in 2008 and 3,395 jobs created
- p3** Launch of *LaunchPad*
- p3** Launch of the NKY Entrepreneurial Alliance
- p4** 5 professional development workshops for educators conducted and unique collaborative partnerships established that will recruit and retain high quality teachers in first year of the NKY Center for Educator Excellence
- p4** 1,200 community members engaged as Champions for Education
- p4** Over 200 students improving literacy skills through NKY *One to One: Practicing Reading with Students* literacy program
- p5** Local Police Department Merger
- p5** Launch of bold Riverfront Vision
- p5** The Catalytic Development Funding Corporation hired Executive Director; \$100,000 raised in initial capital; \$85,000 raised on a multi year basis to fund operations
- p6** Launch of Agenda 360 regional plan



Tri-ED job creation

NKY Tri-ED oversees the primary industry job goal of 14,300 net new jobs that will enable NKY to meet the goal of creating 50,000 net new jobs by 2015. In 2007, 2,540 net new primary jobs were created, putting us at 17.8% of our target goal. Actual job creation data for 2008 will not be available until September 2009. Even though the country is experiencing turbulent economic times, we estimate that NKY will only be slightly behind the target goal of 4,290 primary industry jobs for 2006, 2007, and 2008.

NKYEA

The Northern Kentucky Entrepreneurial Alliance (NKYEA) has been established to market Northern Kentucky as a hub for entrepreneurship and innovation and to facilitate coordination, cooperation, collaboration and communication among those organizations who are involved in spurring entrepreneurial efforts and job growth in our region.

e-zone

Northern Kentucky ezone, the region's Innovation and Commercialization Center, highlights for ezone assisted companies:

- **Packaging Services Group, Inc.:** Kentucky Enterprise Grant for \$30,000
- **Bexion Pharmaceuticals:** \$100,000 grant from the Commonwealth
- **A bioLOGIC company, Charleston Labs:** \$1.3 Million in an equity round
- **TiER1 Performance Solutions:** \$100,000 matching grant from the Department of Defense

competitive economy

Existing Industry: The Major Source of Job and Wealth Creation

Across the country, existing businesses are the primary source of job creation. Northern Kentucky is no exception. Over the last 15 years, 75% of job creation has come from the region's existing industries. Sustaining this economic vibrancy depends first on understanding the needs of existing businesses and second on providing programs and services that ensure economic competitiveness.

This year Northern Kentucky University, in collaboration with the Tri-County Economic Development Authority's Existing Industry division, rolled out *LaunchPad*, a unique program designed to systematically assess the needs and drivers of the region's medium and large businesses to accelerate growth and competitiveness. *LaunchPad* targets companies in the region's key industry sectors and collects data on each company via a unique CEO interview process. The *LaunchPad* profiling method provides a best-practice solution to a vital piece of the region's economic development puzzle.

Data-Driven Competitiveness Leads to Innovative Response

Since September 2008, over 40 businesses have participated in the *LaunchPad* process. The data collected provide key information at two levels. The data from individual companies guide referrals to business development programs delivered by NKU and others. All referrals begin with a company's request for service. Secondly, confidential data from all the profiled companies are rolled up to a regional portfolio. The portfolio allows comparisons to other metropolitan regions, as well as tracking of 92 key performance indicators that guide solution provision.

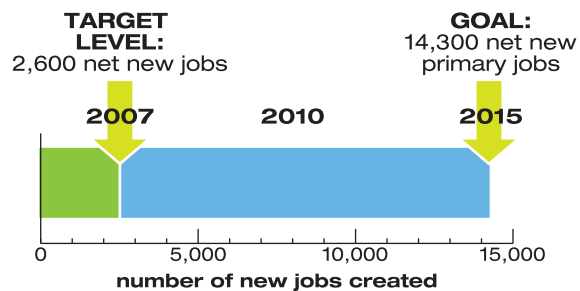
NKU is responding to many of the business competitiveness needs identified through the new *Accelerate Series*. Crafted from the voice of Northern Kentucky businesses, the *Accelerate Series* delivers unique business development offerings in areas such as Lean, Applied Business Informatics, Strategic Visioning, Innovation, and Applied Supervision.

1+1=3

Carefully aligning NKU resources with the goals of Vision 2015 provides the sort of power that is required to move the region towards sustained progress and competitiveness. *LaunchPad* is a program of listening, understanding the voice of existing industry, and providing solutions to needs from regional collaboration.

2008 new, expanding & start-up operations

Tri-ED worked with the Northern Kentucky University's Center for Economic Analysis and Development (CEAD) to provide an economic impact analysis of new job creation, expansions, and new business relocations in 2008. This economic activity is expected to create **1,829** primary jobs and **1,566** indirect jobs, resulting in a total impact of **\$571,099,513** in economic impact in NKY.



educational excellence

Attracting Highly Qualified Teachers is a Challenge Across the Nation

The Northern Kentucky Center for Educator Excellence (CEE) is accelerating its efforts to implement strategies for regional recruitment, retention, and development of our professional educators. In just its first year of operation, the CEE met with superintendents in all 18 school districts, held 5 professional development workshops, took districts to schools across the country to research best practices, and created a system to track teacher turnover.



In addition, the CEE developed a unique partnership that has the potential to increase the number of highly qualified math and science teachers in our schools.

NKY Successes Achieved Through Unique Partnerships

In August of 2008, Vision 2015 and the CEE met with Duke Energy to discuss implementing a pilot version of Transition to Teaching initiative in Northern Kentucky. The Transition to Teaching program involves a partnership in which corporate employees who are eligible for retirement with math, science, or related degrees and 10 years of related field experience are recruited to transition into teaching careers after retirement.

Duke Energy expressed their desire to support this partnership and worked with Duke's national executive leadership team to propose the idea. Final approval for a pilot program was received in February of 2009. The Center also collaborated with Northern Kentucky University's College of Education and science and math teachers in Northern Kentucky school districts to design the Transition to Teaching curriculum and related experiences for prospective teachers.



The Transition to Teaching program could create a much needed pipeline of math and science teachers into NKY schools and give our students the opportunity to learn from teachers with a lifetime of career experiences.

Vision 2015 Links to the Top

Vision 2015 often serves as the "dot connector" to help partner organizations maximize the impact of their work on the community's priorities to reach our aligned goals. The CEE needed help in connecting with the right company with whom to pilot the program. In this instance, Vision 2015 identified the right partner for the CEE and helped build the foundation for a successful partnership.

regional stewardship

- **NKYHelps.org:** 174,870 page views; 148 registered organizations; 820 registered individual volunteers and 1,297 registered group volunteers
- **Celebration of Philanthropy:** 450 community members in attendance; 19 schools earned the "School of Contribution" designation
- **Service Learning:** 2,400 trained teachers in 64 schools; 18,000 children participated in projects; 120 community partners
- **NKY Forum:** 1000 community members participated in public dialogue about NKY issues

champions

Vision 2015 and education partners sponsored a second community education summit — *Literacy: Help NKY Invest in Tomorrow Today* — at Dixie Heights High School in November 2008. Nearly 450 educators, parents, and business and community leaders realized the need to improve reading scores in our region and 100 people committed to becoming reading coaches in the *One to One* literacy program. To date, over 1,200 community members have become Champions for Education and, through advocacy and direct volunteerism, are committed to improving education in our region.

one to one

Current research indicates that when a student reads below grade level in the third grade, he or she becomes more likely to drop out of high school. Vision 2015 entered into a partnership with the Partnership at New Cities to implement the *One to One: Practicing Reading with Students* initiative in Northern Kentucky schools to help improve student reading scores at the primary level. Our strategic timeline calls for 572 coaches to be secured by 2011.

- 212 coaches trained and paired with students
- 17 schools and 6 school districts participating



Boone County Parks

If everything in a vision could be achieved, then the vision wouldn't be bold enough.

When developing the Vision, the community agreed that creating a regional parks plan was instrumental to ensuring Northern Kentucky would be recognized, both nationally and internationally, as a great place to live. A quality regional parks plan would require an enhanced system of parks with trails and greenways that connects the many communities in our region.

Key to achieving this goal is broad public support for a long term, sustained source of local funding. Last year, we supported a grassroots campaign in Boone County to pass a ballot measure that would increase funding for parks and green space. While 33% of Boone County voters were in favor of the measure, it was not enough for the initiative to pass.

Vision 2015 is driven by the aspirations of the people in the community and we must adjust the timing of our work to align with the community's changing priorities.



effective governance

Is Connecting Services Feasible in Northern Kentucky?

Vision 2015 calls for jurisdictions to self examine and conduct research and analysis to ensure the optimization of government service delivery. In March of 2008, the Police Departments of Highland Heights and Southgate approached Vision 2015 for assistance in analyzing opportunities for consolidation and a potential merger of the two organizations. Both police departments were suffering from attrition and were investing significant sums to train officers and pay overtime.

The Northern Kentucky Area Development District conducted a feasibility study and determined that merging the two police departments would increase service, decrease long term costs, improve quality of service, and provide long term financial stability. In September of 2008, the mayors of Highland Heights and Southgate signed an interlocal agreement, resulting in the Highland Heights Southgate Police Authority (HHSPA).

Shared Manpower Results in a Safer Community

Together, the department maintains response times in the 1-3 minute range, covers more area within the city limits, more efficiently spends tax dollars, saves on equipment and supplies, and will ultimately create more forward thinking solutions to future law enforcement demands.

The success of the Southgate and Highland Heights police merger has caught the attention of departments in other surrounding cities, and some are looking at this model and considering integration with HHSPA.

Vision 2015 Sparks Action

Global forces demand that NKY have an even more effective governance system in order to continue to enjoy a strong economy that creates opportunity and sustains a high quality of life for all citizens. These Police Departments realized that movement on their consolidation efforts would occur more quickly with the resources and support from community representatives like Vision 2015.

livable communities

Licking River/Riverfront Commons

In March of 2009, a transformative vision for our regional riverfront was unveiled that will combine the Licking River Greenway & Trails and the Riverfront Commons plans. The Licking River Greenway & Trails project would create an urban greenway from the mouth of the Licking River to the I-275 loop, and the Riverfront Commons project would fix serious erosion problems along our riverbanks, provide a pedestrian connection linking Covington, Newport and Bellevue, and connect the riverfront to the Ft. Thomas parks and trails, Devou Park, the Boone County Park System, and the Cincinnati riverfront parks and trails system.

By combining the two projects and working collaboratively, we can establish and sustain the community-wide commitment to implement these plans and break the total program into a set of manageable pieces that can be funded and constructed every year. The common vision provides the foundation and framework for a Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati regional riverfront, as well as a regional parks and trails network.

urban renaissance

Last June, we announced the launch of Catalytic Funding Corporation of Northern Kentucky and in September, Jeanne Schroer was hired as its Executive Director. To date, the CDFC has raised \$100,000 in initial capital, as well as \$85,000 on a multi-year basis to fund operations. The CDFC has also taken the following actions to reach its goal of raising \$10 million in capital to invest in urban revitalization projects:

- Hosted an urban revitalization workshop to help city leaders identify priority redevelopment projects and best practices for implementing their redevelopment plans
- Met with developers who have interest and expertise in developing urban residential and mixed use projects
- Supported the City of Covington's application for National Stabilization Program funding; Covington subsequently received \$5,000,000 to be used to purchase vacant, blighted or foreclosed properties



what's next?

Develop consistent set of educational achievement indicators

Vision 2015 calls for Northern Kentucky to exceed national performance standards at every educational level. However, a common set of regional metrics for educational progress region-wide does not exist. In many cases, different assessments are being used across geography and grade level; therefore, it is not always possible to develop a regional data set.

Vision 2015 will work with Strive, United Way, school districts, education institutions and other community partners to enhance discussion about the current state of education in our community and drive action in order to take ownership and hold ourselves accountable for improving education in our region.

Continue a comprehensive strategy for partner engagement

Vision 2015 must continually examine how our work will be sustained in order for our region to enjoy economic prosperity and a high quality of life for all residents. Since 2005, Vision 2015 has worked with community partners to launch or expand such initiatives as the Center for Educator Excellence, the Catalytic Development Funding Corporation, Licking River Greenway & Trails master plan, Success by 6, NKYHelps.org, and more.

These initiatives are great wins for our region but they must reach critical mass before we begin to see their true impact. Vision 2015 understands the need for the cultivation and steady growth of these initiatives in order for our community to reach our collective goals.

Align the recommendations of Agenda 360 with Vision 2015

The ultimate success of Vision 2015 goes beyond the individual pursuit of our six strategic focus areas. We are presented with a remarkable opportunity to transform Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky into a leading metropolitan region for talent, jobs, and economic opportunity by aligning the recommendations of Agenda 360 with those of Vision 2015. Through strategic collaboration, Vision 2015 and Agenda 360 will share responsibility in identifying and accomplishing key goals that will significantly impact our regional growth and prosperity.

contact us

50 E. RiverCenter Blvd., Suite 465
Covington, KY 41011
p: 859.291.2020
e: info@vision2015.org
www.vision2015.org

visit our site

Under the direction of a diverse group of business and community volunteers known as the Regional Stewardship Council, Vision 2015 currently oversees the implementation of approximately 35 different projects directly related to the goals outlined in the vision plan.

Due to the limited space available for this year's report, we are unable to list all of our partners and funders who contribute staff time, resources, and expertise to help reach the goals of Vision 2015. However, we are very thankful to the many individuals, organizations, businesses and foundations that have provided financial and project support to Vision 2015 so that we can continue to expand our efforts to advance the community's priorities.

For a complete listing of investors, community partners, Regional Stewardship Council members, staff, and current projects, please visit our website at www.vision2015.org.



urban renaissance • educational excellence • competitive economy
livable communities • regional stewardship • effective governance



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