



Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor / Jack Lavin, Director

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Hobbico To Expand Operations In Champaign *Project To Result In 30 New Hires*

CHICAGO - Governor Rod R. Blagojevich today announced that Hobbico, Inc. is expanding its headquarters location at 2904 Research Road in Champaign. The company is adding 96,000 square feet of office and distribution space. The expansion will create at least 30 new jobs.

"I want to thank the people at Hobbico for making this additional investment in Illinois and in the people of Champaign County," said Governor Blagojevich. "As part of our effort to create jobs in Illinois we will continue to work closely with our homegrown businesses to assist them in their expansion efforts."

Hobbico is eligible for tax credits through the Economic Development for a Growing Economy (EDGE) program and for workforce training grants through the Industrial Training Program (ITP). The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) administers the programs. The company will also benefit from being located in an Enterprise Zone.

"Expanding businesses have particular needs unique to their industry, and it is part of our responsibility to work with these companies in order to address those needs," said DCEO Director Jack Lavin. "In the case of Hobbico, the state worked to provide the appropriate level of assistance in order for the company to expand its Illinois operations while meeting the needs of a growing customer base."

Hobbico is the world's leader in hobby distribution exporting products to more than 70 countries. The company currently employs 600 people full time and 150 part time workers at multiple sites in the Urbana-Champaign area. Hobbico traces its origins to Tower Hobbies which opened in Champaign in 1971.

"Our company has been a part of the business community in Urbana-Champaign for over thirty years and we're proud to be renewing our commitment to Illinois through this expansion project," said Bill Muirheid, Hobbico's Senior Vice President, Finance. "We appreciate the support we've received from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and the Champaign County Economic Development Corporation, and we look forward to our next thirty years in Illinois."

The Champaign County Economic Development Corporation is collaborating with the City of Champaign and Hobbico to address local infrastructure issues.

"The City of Champaign has developed programs to encourage local companies to thrive and grow in our community," said Craig Rost, Deputy City Manager of Development for the City of Champaign. "The expansion of Hobbico is an example of a cooperative partnership between the City of Champaign and a successful business to increase employment and to continue to strengthen their presence in Champaign and the State of Illinois."

"The Economic Development Corporation is very pleased that Hobbico has chosen to expand their presence in Champaign County," said Jill Guth, Executive Director, Champaign County Economic Development Corporation. "Hobbico is a tremendous asset to our community and we look forward to continuing our strong working relationship with the company. This expansion will result in significant job creation for the region and has been an example of an outstanding collaboration between the company, the EDC, the City of Champaign, and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity."

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