Economic Development

Manufacturing Month: Celebrating the Industry That *Makes* Fond du Lac County

October in Wisconsin means falling leaves, pumkpins, football, and Homecoming, but the big daddy of them all.....**Manufacturing Month**. Few places have more reason to celebrate than Fond du Lac County. Manufacturing makes up 21% of all jobs in the county: about 9,900 of 47,100 jobs, according to preliminary August 2026 data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Nationally, the share is closer to 8%, so manufacturing's share of local jobs is about two and a half times the U.S. average.

From precision metal parts, world class cheese and dairy products, marine engines, machines that make machines, and commercial laundry equipment, what's made here is shipped across the country and around the world.

The economic impact reaches well beyond the factory floor. In 2024, the county's goods-producing industries, led by manufacturing, produced about $2.2 billion of a $6.75 billion local economy, nearly one-third of everything produced in the county (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis via FRED). Statewide, more than 465,000 Wisconsinites work in manufacturing, and the sector accounts for more than 16% of the state's GDP.

Those paychecks support local shops, restaurants, schools and nonprofits, and manufacturers' purchases keep hundreds of suppliers, trucking firms and service providers in business.

Manufacturing Month is also about the future. With county unemployment at just 3.2%, employers are competing for skilled workers, and the next generation of machinists, welders, engineers and technicians matters more than ever. Investment in facilities and programs from our local technical college, Moraine Park, is more important now than ever before. Plant tours, school partnerships (like those created by Envision) and programs like Make My Move help students and newcomers see a rewarding career, and a great place to live. This October, we thank the manufacturers and the people who work for them for the role they play in contributing to Fond du Lac County's vibrancy and prosperity.

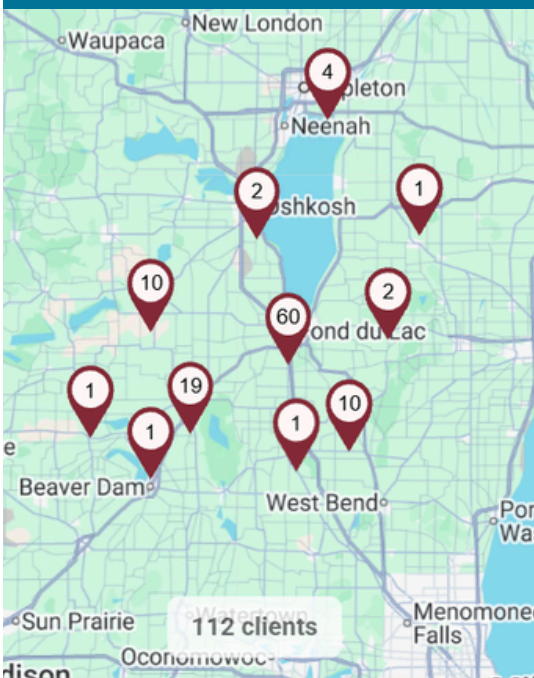
October 2026

ENVISION
GREATER FOND DU LAC

FAST FIVE

(All items underlined are hyperlinked)

1. ***Defining the Skilled Trades: A Data Driven Blueprint for the Future***
2. ***Leadership Wisconsin - Community Leadership 2.0***
3. ***Why So Many Students Wanting to Get Into the Trades Are Being Turned Away.***
4. **The Approach at Ledgeview Lanes Opens in Fond du Lac**
5. *Entrepreneurial Clients Served YTD 2026:* ***112***



Upcoming Ignite Small Business Workshops and Events

Customer Service Excellence by Holiday Automotive
Wednesday, October 28, 2026 (9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.)
Marian University CD Smith Boardroom
Stayer Center 45 S. National Ave.
Join us and learn how to implement an amazing customer experience from one of the best role models in Wisconsin!

Envision THIS! Pitch Contest & End of Year Social!
Wednesday, November 4, 2026 (5:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.)
The Passenger Lounge, LLC 105 S. Brooke St. Fond du Lac
Everyone is welcome to join our End of Year Social with a preference for entrepreneurs, small businesses, local government, business resource organizations, and anyone in between!

Click here to view and register for all of our events!

Workforce Programming Highlights

The month of October was full of amazing workforce programming events! Students across the county are benefiting from the generosity of time, passion, and resources of our business partners. Check out these highlights!

Career Connections Academy

Over 1,000 middle school students from across the county attended Career Connections Academy at Marian University! Students learned from over 25 presenters!

Health Care Expo

40 high school stduents from Horace Mann High School participated in a Health Care Expo with presentations from SSM Health and Froedtert-Thedacare.

Fond du Lac R.O.C.K. Tour

Fond du Lac High School students attended a tour at EP Direct to learn about graphic design!

Leadership Wisconsin - Community Leadership 2.0

Are you a Leadership Fond du Lac County alumni? Are you looking to further your leadership journey, connect with other leaders from across the state, and delve into a critical topic facing our state? Then consider applying to be part of Leadership Wisconsin - Community Leadership 2.0! This program is designed for leaders from across the state to gather both virtually and in person over the course of nine months. The cohort will explore the topic of housing through a deep lens with nuanced discussions using resources and information presented by experts from across the field. Envison's Emily Waisanen participated in the most recent cohort which culminated in a Community Assembly held in Kenosha County and examined the concept of factory-built housing. For more information about Leadership Wisconsin, click the link listed in Fast Five or reach out to Emily Waisanen at ewaisanen@envisiongreaterfdl.com.

Leadership Wisconsin COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP 2.0

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Have a suggestion or comment to make? Click here to do so anony-mously.