American Eagle Outfitters opens distribution center
1 million SF center largest in Humboldt Industrial Park

American Eagle Outfitters (AEO), a specialty retailer of clothing, accessories and personal care products in the United States and internationally, recently launched its 1-million-square-foot distribution center in Greater Hazleton. The company officials say they are pleased with the region’s labor force and the associates they have hired to date.

American Eagle Outfitters opened the distribution center in Humboldt Industrial Park, Hazle Township, this summer. The company is a specialty retailer of high-quality, on-trend products for women and men, including clothing, accessories and personal care items. It sells its products in more than 900 stores throughout the United States and Canada and online internationally.

“We chose Greater Hazleton for several reasons, including the talent pool in the area, the opportunity to build a facility from the ground up and the easy access to Interstates 81 and 80,” said Director of Operations Chris Miller.

Miller said the company needed to expand its direct-to-consumer capabilities and worked with consulting firms and a site selector to determine the location of its new distribution center, the largest the company operates.

“We found a great deal of talent locally with many candidates who met our needs from a production and operations standpoint,” Miller said. About 60 percent of the mid- and upper-level management positions were filled with local hires, she said.

The center is the company’s first omni-channel facility, which means it serves online customers (Continued on page 3)

Workforce meets company needs

Greater Hazleton and the surrounding region have a workforce that is qualified, ready and available. Senior Human Resources Manager Sandy Sola said American Eagle Outfitters received hundreds of applicants for its positions, and the company has been pleased with the caliber of Greater Hazleton’s workforce. “Part of our staffing strategy is to partner with local temporary agencies to help us secure our entry-level workforce. We are currently in the process of converting many of those individuals to full-time employment. And, we still have a very healthy candidate pipeline of individuals trying to find positions (Continued on page 3)
Business financing available through CAN DO

Funding assistance is one of the many ways that CAN DO provides help to new and existing employers throughout Luzerne County. CAN DO has access to a variety of financing sources and offers its expertise to assist businesses in obtaining the necessary funding for projects. CAN DO’s business financing specialists can help identify the appropriate funding sources and package and complete applications. Many financing types are available in the form of both grants and low-interest loans. Some of the grants and low-interest loans include land and building acquisition loans, Small Business First loans, machinery and equipment loans, workforce training grants, and job creation and investment loans.

CAN DO has been certified by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development as an industrial development corporation (IDC) and an area loan organization (ALO), enabling the organization to act as a conduit for state funding. CAN DO has more than 55 years of experience of helping companies obtain local, regional and state funding for a variety of projects. Vice President of Sales and Marketing Joseph Lettiere said CAN DO looks to connect companies with the appropriate resources to meet their needs. “CAN DO is a liaison between businesses that require assistance and organizations that provide incentives for such projects. Throughout our history, we have assisted hundreds of companies in start-ups, acquisitions and expansions. Our experience and the relationships we have developed save companies time and money.”

CAN DO’s financing experts guide companies through all stages of the process, beginning with explaining the variety of available funding packages. They can also help with completing and submitting funding applications.

“Through its affiliation with state and regional agencies, CAN DO is able to assist area businesses in making their projects more viable by obtaining the necessary investment and securing favorable loan conditions,” said CAN DO Director of Economic Development James Kelshaw.

Recently, CAN DO helped secure more than $2.5 million in funding for two northeastern Pennsylvania companies through state low-interest loans recently approved by the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority (PIDA).

The loans include $2.2 million for DHD Realty to renovate a downtown Hazleton office building and $285,000 for Pittston-based GT Fabrication, Inc., to buy a new manufacturing facility that is located outside of a flood plain.

The approvals were announced by Gov. Tom Corbett as part of his JOB51st PA initiative, supporting the continued growth of manufacturers and regional efforts to redevelop old and abandoned buildings for new growth opportunities.

To learn more about the types of funding available that could assist your project, visit www.hazletoncando.com or contact 570-455-1508.

CAN DO helps tenant with expansion

CAN DO has assisted another tenant with a recent expansion project. BelleMarque LLC, located in Valmont Industrial Park, was previously located in two separate spaces in CAN DO’s multi-tenant complex. The company, which manufactures napkin products, moved into 130 Lions Drive in Valmont Industrial Park after CAN DO purchased the building and renovated it specifically to BelleMarque’s requirements.

BelleMarque General Manager Alec Marcalus said, “We needed more space to accommodate our growing business, including more room for production, warehousing and employees. The new facility has more of everything we need: dock doors, space for employees and more. CAN DO did a fantastic job of fitting it out for our needs.”

Hazleton is the sole location of BelleMarque, founded in 2009. The company’s new location is 60,000 square feet, up from its previous 35,000 square feet of combined space.

Marcalus spoke highly of CAN DO’s assistance, saying, “CAN DO has been a very cooperative and constructive partner in identifying and getting us settled here in terms of our building space, our location and our integration into the community. They have been very helpful in every way and have been a key element to our company’s decision to be located in the Hazleton area.”

The company currently has more than 40 employees and anticipates additional hiring with the expansion.

Vice President of Sales and Marketing Joseph Lettiere said BelleMarque’s expansion demonstrates CAN DO’s relationship with companies in Greater Hazleton. “Our relationship with BelleMarque has continued well beyond the initial recruitment and startup of the facility. When we heard they were outgrowing the space in our building, we stepped in to see how we could help. Our 55-plus years of economic development experience gives us the ability to assist companies in a variety of ways.”

BelleMarque’s former spaces on Rotary Drive in Valmont Industrial Park are available for lease. The flex spaces available are 24,000 square feet in 7B and 9,117 square feet in 7C. For more information on the properties, call CAN DO’s marketing department at 570-455-1508.

CAN DO is a nonprofit economic development organization focused on creating employment opportunities throughout Greater Hazleton. The organization’s real estate offerings include single-tenant buildings and multi-tenant complexes that it maintains and leases in three industrial parks and one corporate center.

BelleMarque LLC has expanded to this property in Valmont Industrial Park.
“We’ve been really happy with the talent pool we’ve found here and the individuals we’ve hired to join our team.”

— Sandy Sola,
American Eagle Outfitters
Senior Human Resources Manager

Local workforce abundant and skilled

American Eagle Outfitters Chief Operating Officer Michael Rempell speaks to employees and dignitaries gathered at the facility’s grand opening.

AEO finds a home in Hazleton area

(continued from page 1)

as well as retail stores. It is the first distribution center in the company’s history that was specifically built as an omni-channel facility.

Senior Human Resources Manager Sandy Sola said, “We’ve been really happy with the talent pool we’ve found here and the individuals we’ve hired to join our team. AEO prides itself on a culture of fun and an environment where people live their life and love their job, and that’s resonated really well in this area. That includes the support we’ve received from partners such as the PA CareerLink, CAN DO and the Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce and is also a testament to the individuals who live and work in this area.”

Sola and Miller said CAN DO, the Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce and the PA CareerLink® were helpful partners in the company’s transition to the area, giving them tours and introducing them to local support organizations.

“This area offers everything a large town would offer with a small-town feel. It’s a great area to raise a family. On a professional level, the talent pool is excellent, and I appreciate the team we’ve put together here. I also appreciate that there are many distribution centers in the area, as we share many commonalities even though we process different types of units,” Miller said.

The facility is highly technical with 100 percent of its product transported using conveyors. It also uses a software system to help drive the efficiency of the center. In addition, the facility is a LEED certified building. LEED or Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design, is a green building certification program that recognizes best-in-class building strategies and practices.

Hazleton and Wilkes-Barre PA CareerLink® Site Administrator Christine Jensen pointed to a recent report prepared by the Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board on workforce demand in Luzerne and Schuylkill counties. The report shows that there are 1.6 unemployed people for every online job posting. Jensen said the figure doesn’t include people considered underemployed and those currently working part-time but looking for full-time work.

“There is a significant percentage of the population that is available for work. We are actively working with them to make certain that they have the skills that our employers need. We reach out to employers to determine what their workforce needs are for the future,” Jensen said.

PA CareerLink® specialists help employers search for employees with the right skills using the JobGateway® website. Training dollars are also available through the On-the-Job Training Program, which reimburses employers a portion of a new employee’s salary during the first six months of employment to compensate for lost productivity during the employee’s training period.

Local workforce abundant and skilled

(continued from page 1)

with American Eagle Outfitters,” she said.

Sola spoke highly of the assistance that American Eagle Outfitters received from the PA CareerLink®. “CareerLink representatives toured our center and met with us to understand the types of employees we wanted to hire. They also explained to us the various skill sets available and types of schedules and wages that are competitive in the area. That information was used to craft an in-depth staffing plan that helped us arrive at the talent we ended up hiring,” she said.

“They also gave us exposure to the labor market, sending us applications and resumes from individuals. We used their facility several times to host trainings and seminars. All of those efforts helped lead us to staff the team that we did. Not only was CareerLink helpful to us early on, but they still are one of our key partners,” Sola said.

The assistance provided by the PA CareerLink® includes training to help employees meet the goals of their employers, channeling funding from the state to pay for the training. A variety of training is available through the PA CareerLink® to ensure a skilled workforce. Programs such as plumbing and heating technology, industrial maintenance, CNC (computerized numeric control) technology and building maintenance technology are among the 123 certified programs offered through the state.

Senior Human Resources Manager Sandy Sola said, “We’ve been really happy with the talent pool we’ve found here and the individuals we’ve hired to join our team. AEO prides itself on a culture of fun and an environment where people live their life and love their job, and that’s resonated really well in this area. That includes the support we’ve received from partners such as the PA CareerLink, CAN DO and the Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce and is also a testament to the individuals who live and work in this area.”

Sola and Miller said CAN DO, the Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce and the PA CareerLink® were helpful partners in the company’s transition to the area, giving them tours and introducing them to local support organizations.

“This area offers everything a large town would offer with a small-town feel. It’s a great area to raise a family. On a professional level, the talent pool is excellent, and I appreciate the team we’ve put together here. I also appreciate that there are many distribution centers in the area, as we share many commonalities even though we process different types of units,” Miller said.

The facility is highly technical with 100 percent of its product transported using conveyors. It also uses a software system to help drive the efficiency of the center. In addition, the facility is a LEED certified building. LEED, or Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design, is a green building certification program that recognizes best-in-class building strategies and practices.

Local workforce abundant and skilled

(continued from page 1)

with American Eagle Outfitters,” she said.

Sola spoke highly of the assistance that American Eagle Outfitters received from the PA CareerLink®. “CareerLink representatives toured our center and met with us to understand the types of employees we wanted to hire. They also explained to us the various skill sets available and types of schedules and wages that are competitive in the area. That information was used to craft an in-depth staffing plan that helped us arrive at the talent we ended up hiring,” she said.

“They also gave us exposure to the labor market, sending us applications and resumes from individuals. We used their facility several times to host trainings and seminars. All of those efforts helped lead us to staff the team that we did. Not only was CareerLink helpful to us early on, but they still are one of our key partners,” Sola said.

The assistance provided by the PA CareerLink® includes training to help employees meet the goals of their employers, channeling funding from the state to pay for the training. A variety of training is available through the PA CareerLink® to ensure a skilled workforce. Programs such as plumbing and heating technology, industrial maintenance, CNC (computerized numeric control) technology and building maintenance technology are among the 123 certified programs offered through the state.

Hazleton and Wilkes-Barre PA CareerLink® Site Administrator Christine Jensen pointed to a recent report prepared by the Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board on workforce demand in Luzerne and Schuylkill counties. The report shows that there are 1.6 unemployed people for every online job posting. Jensen said the figure doesn’t include people considered underemployed and those currently working part-time but looking for full-time work.

“There is a significant percentage of the population that is available for work. We are actively working with them to make certain that they have the skills that our employers need. We reach out to employers to determine what their workforce needs are for the future,” Jensen said.

PA CareerLink® specialists help employers search for employees with the right skills using the JobGateway® website. Training dollars are also available through the On-the-Job Training Program, which reimburses employers a portion of a new employee’s salary during the first six months of employment to compensate for lost productivity during the employee’s training period.
Featured Properties

Flex / Light Industrial For Lease
103 Rotary Drive, Valmont Industrial Park
West Hazleton, PA 18202

- 24,000 SF available
- 1,500 SF office
- 120’ x 200’
- 22’ Ceiling Height
- T8 Fluorescent Lighting
- Power: 200 amp/120v/280v/3Phase and 1200 amp/480v/3 Phase
- 40’ x 40’ column spacing

Contact CAN DO today at 570-455-1508!

Flex / Light Industrial For Lease
115 Rotary Drive, Valmont Industrial Park
West Hazleton, PA 18202

- 9,117 SF available
- ±120’ x 80’
- 21’ to 24’ Ceiling Height
- Power: 200 amp, 240v/480v/3 Phase
- T8 Fluorescent Lighting
- 40’ x 40’ column spacing

Contact CAN DO today at 570-455-1508!

For information about these or any other properties, call 800.54.CANDO outside PA or 570.455.1508, send an e-mail to cando@hazletoncando.com or visit our website at www.hazletoncando.com

FOLLOW US ON
www.facebook.com/hazletoncando
www.twitter.com/hazletoncando
www.youtube.com/hazletoncando