

Company Spotlight



When Lake Area Designs relocated its business from Sturgis, Mich., to LaGrange in early 2013, President Rob West had high expectations. He wasn't disappointed.

"I can't think of a better place to live and work," West said. "We have been welcomed with open arms. (Everyone) is very excited to have a new start-up that has dressed up the buildings we are in and brought more jobs to the area."

"The local workforce has been fantastic; we are a wood shop and this area has lots of workers who are either Amish or non-Amish who have wood experience of some kind. The local and state officials have also been great to work with."



President Rob West, left, and Vice President of Production Brian Miller.

Lake Area Designs, which invested \$1.5 million in its new facility, received tax abatement at the request of the LaGrange County Economic Development Corp. and was also offered \$325,000 in conditional tax credits from the Indiana Economic Development Corp. based on the company's job creation plans.

"They have all opened our eyes," West said, "to why Indiana and LaGrange County are the best places to have a business."

The Company File

Lake Area Designs

Year Founded: 2013 (formerly Lake Area Moldings)

Locations: LaGrange

Annual Revenue: \$6.5 million

Employees: 24

Facility Sizes: 39,000 square feet



A worker operates a wood moulder at Lake Area Designs.

Deciding LaGrange County Factors:

- Proximity to customers
- Favorable workers' compensation and property insurance
- Experienced workforce

Lake Area Designs manufactures wood furniture and custom moldings for the recreational vehicle industry and other businesses.

West anticipates rapid growth resulting in part from the company's relocation. He expects annual revenue will grow to \$10 million by the end of 2014 and the number of employees will increase to 32 by 2016.

"Our outlooks looks great," he said. "We want to continue to grow sales and also grow our production capacity with building space and workers."

"The local workforce has been fantastic..."

"We hope to keep being a positive influence on LaGrange and LaGrange County."

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