

PRESS & GUIDE

Welcome Home effort good for business

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By Jennifer Giering

Last week, the Welcome Home Dearborn campaign was rolled out to community leaders, stakeholders and the media at the Ford Community & Performing Arts Center, one of Dearborn's crown jewels.

The event and presentation was first class, and the team at the JCI Group should be congratulated. Overwhelmingly, there was a feeling of pride in those who were the first to see the multi-faceted marketing and advertising campaign.

In leadership and in business, you quickly learn to accentuate your strengths and I believe the campaign will accomplish this and more.

In a speech several years ago, Dan Gilbert, of Quicken Loans, explained "penny-pinching is not a business model." I agree. In these times, when we're vying for residents' and investors' attention, it makes sense to invest money on marketing and advertising. This is something we preach to chamber members every day when we're helping them create their business plans. I applaud the actions and risks taken by the city administration and the team at JCI Group to bring this campaign forward.

We have a lot to gain, not only in the residential community, but also in the business community. Already our corporate partners are referring professionals relocating to Dearborn to the Welcome Home Dearborn Website and using the four-color brochure to lure potential employees to work in Dearborn and hopefully to buy in Dearborn. I know a healthy and vibrant community equals a healthy and vibrant business community. It's a win-win for everyone.

Dearborn is not alone. Soon, \$60 million in new funding for Michigan tourism and business promotion could be available – as early as this summer. The state would spend \$40 million on tourism and promotion and \$20 million for business marketing of a two-year period. This would be in addition to \$10 million set aside for tourism promotion this year and \$11.35 million designated for business promotion.

The launch of the Welcome Home Dearborn Campaign will coincide nicely with the Big Open House scheduled for April 27. This is an opportunity to showcase not only homes for sale in the community, but also businesses and the other great amenities Dearborn has to offer. The region will have seen six weeks of marketing and advertising Dearborn when this day comes. Perfect timing.

We're all in this together; let's stick together, accentuate the positives and welcome everyone to Dearborn.