Impact Seven

Almena, Wisconsin

Organized in 1970 by local citizens, Impact Seven’s mission is to build capacity for low-income communities by providing services and development in business, housing, and property management.

Headquartered in Almena, Wisconsin, with a branch office in Milwaukee, Impact Seven is a certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), manages several Small Business Administration (SBA) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) loan programs, provides venture capital, and is a part-owner of a community development bank, started in conjunction with a partner Community Development Corporation (CDC).

Impact Seven is one of the largest nonprofit developers of affordable housing in Wisconsin, managing 1,300 units for families and elderly residents. As a consultant and developer, Impact Seven has helped numerous communities make significant strides toward revitalizing distressed housing, sagging economies, and dwindling populations.

Impact Seven facilitates comprehensive community economic development with Wisconsin communities, taking the role of consultant, developer, and financier, encouraging local bank lending and outside investment from state, federal, and private sources. Impact Seven has helped several communities organize for development, and it has helped leverage hundreds of millions of dollars for development over its history, profoundly impacting many Wisconsin communities.

To date, Impact Seven has placed $21 million in New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) allocations from the CDFI Fund. This flexible source of financing has helped Impact Seven make loans and investments in businesses located in qualified census tracts throughout Wisconsin, creating jobs and additional community development.

Exodus Machines

Exodus Machines, a major Superior-area employer, produces wheeled material handlers for the scrap and recycling industry. After introducing its first machine to the market in late 2009, Exodus formed an alliance in 2012 with Caterpillar. Under their agreement, Exodus products are branded as Caterpillar products and are marketed and distributed through Caterpillar’s vast distribution network.

The agreement required Exodus to undergo a major expansion in order to increase its production from six machines per month to 32. To meet this production goal, Exodus had to acquire a 2.88-acre lot and construct a 60,000 square-foot building addition.

Because Exodus was unable to obtain financing for such a large expansion, its ability to continue its successful relationship with Caterpillar was at risk. Thanks to a nearly $1 million investment from Impact Seven—which also provided the technical assistance needed to access public and nontraditional financing opportunities—Exodus was able to expand its operations.

As a result of this investment, Exodus is projected to create 206 new positions over the next five years and as many as 350 jobs over the next six to eight years, including well-paying jobs in welding, machining, assembly, engineering, purchasing, manufacturing, and management.