

# Firm plans growth at Ironworks

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Universal Acoustic & Emission Technologies — a global designer and manufacturer of acoustic and emissions products for the power generation, oil and gas, industrial and original equipment markets — has signed a long-term lease at the Ironworks Campus and has committed to adding 50 new jobs to the Beloit area.

The process is expected to unfold over the next 2-and-a-half years, according to Universal Marketing Manager Ron Jake.

The lease, which represents 106,000-square-feet of production and office space with an additional 67,000 square feet in reserve for potential expansion, will enable the company to grow its manufacturing and distribution capabilities. The Beloit facility will house Universal Acoustic & Emission Technologies Center of Excellence, which brings together a team of engineers, designers, business staff and manufacturing specialists under one roof.

AET moved into a 22,000-square-foot space in the Ironworks in March of 2012, and had reported in December of 2012 it planned to expand. Jake said there are currently 16 employees and said the company is recruiting for at least another three, and more very soon.

Established in 1959, Universal Acoustic & Emission Technologies (AET) conducts business on a global platform from its headquarters in Stoughton, Wis. AET has particular expertise with diesel engine and gas turbine applications. AET also offers standard lines of products for blowers, engines, fans, compressors and other industrial products requiring silencing or air filtration.

Mark Membrino, project manager and vice president of Asset Management, said the global company is expanding in the Ironworks Building as the campus moves forward on a total renovation project valued at \$30-40 million which will bring jobs to the community.

Hendricks Commercial Properties approached the YMCA in January about a possible location in the Ironworks building, as Hendricks wants to renovate the vacant southern portion of the Ironworks building in order to market it for commercial space. The northern portion of the building would house a state-of-the-art manufacturing space.

Hendricks also is looking to create a parking lot cul-de-sac on Third Street between the southern building and the northern manufacturing space.

“The whole complex is going to take a whole new look in the next year where we are going to build a road through the building, splitting it into two,” Membrino said.

Although it's not been approved, Membrino noted discussions are under way to build a pedestrian bridge connecting the landing outside Heritage View with the other side of the river.

The Ironworks Campus is a 750,000-square-foot mixed-use property home to more than a dozen companies. The property is owned, managed and developed by Hendricks Commercial Properties LLC (HCP). For nearly 150 years, the Ironworks site was home to the Beloit Corp., which began as a foundry but evolved into a manufacturer of papermaking machines. It closed in 1999.

Diane Hendricks and her late husband Ken Hendricks purchased the Beloit Corp. site, renamed it the Ironworks Campus, renovated the buildings for office and manufacturing tenants and now lease more than 400,000 square feet to 13 tenants.

"We are excited to be a part of the renaissance of this historic business complex, all while growing our capacity to provide better service to new and existing customers," Jake said.

The Universal Acoustic & Emission Technologies project wouldn't have been possible without the help of Rock County Economic Development Manager James Otterstein, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corp. and the City of Beloit, Membrino said.

Eppstein Uhen and Excel Engineering provided architectural design and engineering services for the Ironworks Campus, and Corporate Contractors Inc. performed construction services for tenant improvements.