

Jobs Watch: Canadian Manufacturer Expanding In Burke County

By Administrator

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RALEIGH, (SGRToday.com) - More than 200 jobs are coming to Burke County, thanks to expansion by Richelieu Legwear International Inc. (Richelieu Legwear). The company will invest \$16 million in a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility resulting in the creation of 205 new jobs in Hildebran by the end of 2018.

Average annual salary will near \$38,000 plus benefits, much higher than Burke County's annual average of \$32,834.

"Western North Carolina continues to be a top choice for international companies looking to establish and expand advanced manufacturing facilities," said Commerce Secretary Sharon Decker in a statement. "This is an important show of support for rural North Carolina."

The company is a leading provider of legwear products to Walmart and other major retailers in the U.S., Canada and internationally under the brand names Peds, MediPeds and Growing Socks. Employees at the new facility will manufacture socks and will be supported by a long-term commitment from the company's leading customer, Walmart.

"We were fortunate to have had access to a skilled North Carolina workforce in 2011 that has contributed to our success, and are excited about building upon this strong foundation with new additions to our team," said Richelieu president Michael Penner in the announcement. "The decision to invest in North Carolina was a direct result of the support provided by the state that is enabling us to attract, train and retain a highly qualified workforce. The state grant is just one example of our good working relationship with Governor McCrory and his Commerce team to the benefit of North Carolinians."

The project is made possible in part by an award to Richelieu Legwear from the state Job Development Investment Grant (JDIG) program, as voted by the state Economic Investment Committee. Receipt of the award is based on proof of job creation and other performance requirements. JDIGs are awarded only to new and expanding businesses and industrial projects whose benefits exceed the costs to the state, and which would not be undertaken in North Carolina without the grant.

Under the terms of the company's JDIG award, Richelieu Legwear is eligible to receive up to twelve annual grants equal to 75 percent of the state personal income tax withholdings from the eligible new jobs created since the date of the initial award. Receipt of each annual grant is based on state-certified proof that the company has fulfilled incremental job creation requirements. Over twelve years, the JDIG award could yield aggregate benefits to Richelieu Legwear of \$2.9 million.