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October 30, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM: Jean Van Rensselar, McElroy Associates, 630-363-8081

RE: Economic Good Times are Still Rolling in DeKalb County

Careful planning on the part of the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation, a little luck, and a superior technology infrastructure are shielding the county's economy from what other parts of the country are experiencing. In essence, the good times are still rolling.

"A diverse economy and Northern Illinois University are the secrets of our continued success," said Paul Borek, the DCEDC's executive director. "We've always been able to offer affordable business locations and for the past few years we've had a cutting-edge technology infrastructure: add in our agriculture and the fact that we're so close to Chicago – it's all positioned us well."

One of the most attractive aspects of doing business in DeKalb County is NIUNet. It's a 175-mile fiber optic ring using a combination of new and existing fiber lines to create high-speed communication technology that rivals Silicon Valley.

NIUNet connects to Chicago, the I-WIRE network, Argonne National Laboratory and other national research networks through the link at nearby Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory. Through NIUNet, businesses and research facilities can connect to dozens of other high-speed networks worldwide.

One of the sites taking advantage of the new technology is the 343-acre DeKalb Business Center, located two miles from NIU at the southeast corner of I-88 and Route 23. The site offers next-generation technology only available at Chicago's top research facilities.

Dr. Robert Gleeson, director of the Center for Governmental Studies at NIU, said, "We are seeing global investors putting portions of their operations in key places around the world, and this region is one of the areas they are most interested in."

The NIUNet infrastructure anchors a strong, nearly recession-proof agricultural export base and a diverse, expanding manufacturing mix as well as a growing medical service industry.

This wasn't luck. The DCEDC has been working aggressively for the past 21 years to attract new business and industry into the county. So far, they've overseen over \$1 billion in industrial and commercial development.

"We've been careful to maintain a well-rounded portfolio that includes industries from a variety of sectors," Borek said. "We aren't in the recession mindset and I don't expect that we will be. We'll continue to direct our energies toward improving and expanding what we already have."

For more information about the DeKalb County economy and the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation, contact Paul Borek by e-mail: Borek@DCEDC.org, or administrator Linda Heinisch: Heinisch@DCEDC.org. The phone number for both is 815-895-2711.