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MADISON HEIGHTS - At a time when most headlines lament yet more jobs lost to outsourcing, one company new to Madison Heights promises to work at the global level while retaining jobs stateside - and creating them. PAT Engineering Enterprises, based in the Middle Eastern state of Qatar with additional operations in Southeast Asia, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the start of its North American division June 15.

Headquartered on Barrington Street off of West 13 Mile Road in Madison Heights, the engineering, consulting and construction company is set to meet with 14 local businesses to form potential partnerships for various infrastructure and energy projects in Kuwait, India, South Korea and Qatar that'll create employment in Michigan.

"It'll definitely help our local businesses out," said Linda Williams, economic development coordinator for the city of Madison Heights. "For example, we have a steel company here providing the parts that are going into refineries in the Middle East. That obviously creates work and ultimately retains jobs. Instead of layoff notices, you have job contracts that are ongoing."

Williams added she's hopeful that "at the end of the day, some of our Madison Heights businesses can partner up with them and arrange a deal where it creates new jobs and keeps jobs in Madison Heights."

Carol Spellman, vice president of PAT Engineering's North American division, agreed with Williams and said the outlook's good, noting "we have many good companies here that do quality work - on time, skilled, everything that we need." Spellman, who also works as a Realtor for Century 21 Campbell Realty on 12 Mile, set in motion the chain of events leading to PAT Engineering's western debut.

Inspiration struck last June while she was attending a workshop on taking businesses global, presented by MBC Global to the Madison Heights Downtown Development Authority.

Joe Cool, president of Cool & Associates, a consulting firm that helps mediumsized businesses expand into the global marketplace, was presenting a slideshow when one slide, depicting Cool's year in Qatar's capital city of Doha, caught Spellman's eye, reminding her of Shrawan Tiwari, executive manager of PAT Engineering, whose family she helped find a home stateside in Troy.

As Cool explains, "We've lost the automobile industry, and now what we do is we look for others, for good folks like Shrawan, who has a ton of work to be done in the Middle East. Carol was (at the workshop); Carol knew Shrawan. Carol connected Shrawan and I together via e-mail, and now look at us." Once Spellman brought Cool and Tiwari together, plans began for PAT Engineering's foray into the Canadian and U. S. markets. Cool found Madison Heights to have market sectors favorable to the Middle Eastern company, including businesses that can help PAT Engineering meet its environmental standards.

"Most of the specifications now are green, and we know what green means. We have a lot of that technology right here in southeastern Michigan," Cool said. As an example, "Biomin International in Oak Park has a patented water and oil separation product line (that can) go right into Qatar Petroleum." Despite tough economic times, Cool said, he's confident PAT Engineering's arrival will make a positive difference.

"I was born and raised in the city of Pontiac. I've worked in 55 countries in the world, and I've returned to the area of my birth to make a difference. That's what we're doing, right here, right now," Cool said. "There are companies that are going through trying times, but we have manufacturing, we have engineering. With all the expertise we have here, there's no reason we can't go into the global marketplace and be successful.

We have the beginnings of it right here."

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