

VIEW*&*VISIONS

Bowles *Rice*

BOWLESRICE.COM

FALL/WINTER 2023



Taking the Ohio River Valley to the World



Keith Burdette
Polymer Alliance Zone

Keith Burdette is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Polymer Alliance Zone, Inc. (PAZ). Prior to joining PAZ, Burdette served as Cabinet Secretary for the West Virginia Department of Commerce, Executive Director of the West Virginia Development Office, Chairman of the West Virginia Development Authority, and Chairman of the Jobs Investment Trust. His experience includes spearheading major economic development projects, workforce training, expansion, and new construction initiatives. Burdette is also recognized nationally and internationally as a skilled professional with a successful track-record in the many facets of economic development.

The Ohio River Valley has been a center for both commerce and innovation since before the inception of the state of West Virginia. In fact, many of the forward thinkers who envisioned and spearheaded the creation of West Virginia made their homes near the mighty Ohio River. Today, the valley still plays a vital role in the economic life of our state and the future looks even brighter.

In 1996, Governor Gaston Caperton created the Polymer Alliance Zone by Executive Order. In doing so, Governor Caperton acknowledged that the polymer industry was “an important component of the state’s economy” that was “primed for growth and expansion.” A lot has changed in West Virginia in the past 27 years, but the premise on which the Polymer Alliance Zone (PAZ) was created has not waived.

Our strategic mission has grown, as has the zone itself. Today, PAZ has grown from the original three counties of Wood, Mason, and Jackson to encompass seven counties along the



WEST VIRGINIA
**POLYMER
ALLIANCE ZONE**
ENERGY. PROXIMITY. SUCCESS.

Department of Economic Development. We strongly believe that achieving lasting industrial growth and fostering the creation of rewarding and sustaining careers for our citizens and those who wish to live here is truly a team effort.

We understand that in the competitive climate we live in, you can’t wait for new opportunities to find you; you must go find them! In just the last year, PAZ has traveled the globe to spread

“We believe that we have a message that will resonate when we have the opportunity to deliver it in front of the right people.”

Ohio River – from Wayne County in the south to Tyler County in the north. Our outreach is international, and our marketing efforts are broad-based. PAZ owns and manages over 200 acres of industrial parks and over 800,000 square feet of industrial space under roof. We partner with the local and regional economic development organizations and have aligned ourselves closely with the West Virginia

the message: West Virginia is a place where your company can be successful and grow, and your employees can live a productive, safe, and satisfying life.

In Dusseldorf, Germany, we participated in the largest trade show in our industry in the world. Over 177,000 visitors from 167 countries attended. Over 3,000 companies from 59

countries exhibited. In New York, we exhibited at Plastec East, where companies specializing in injection molding, 3D printing, packaging, and other related plastic manufacturing met. Companies like Boston Scientific, Apple, Abbott, and General Motors participated, with over 70% having active projects.



Promoting PAZ at the 2023 SelectUSA Investment Summit.

In Houston, we were a sponsor at the World Petrochemical Conference – the premier gathering of industry leaders and global experts. We participated in an economic recruitment event at the French Embassy in Washington, D.C. At Select USA, we partnered with the West Virginia Department of Economic Development to carry our message to participants at the United States Department of Commerce’s annual event that attracts companies from all over the globe interested in investing in the USA. We have participated in prospect meetings in Italy, Germany, and Switzerland. We’ve hosted companies that are both domestically and internationally based. All of that in just the past year.

Last December, we purchased 363,000 square feet of underutilized industrial space in Huntington, West Virginia. Partnering with David Lieving, President of the Huntington Area Development Council, we have been able to prepare it for a new tenant and strengthen the relationship with the existing tenant, Koppers. The building is unique. It not only has over 160,000 square feet of available, leasable space, it has five overhead cranes with the capacity of lifting between five and 20 tons. It has one active rail line into the building and has the potential to add a second line with an interior rail siding of over 425 feet

and a third rail siding that runs along the length of the building. One of the challenges development professionals encounter in recruiting new companies is identifying buildings that can adequately house heavy manufacturing. This building will fit that bill.



Industrial manufacturing facility in Huntington, West Virginia.

Another exciting addition to our property in Davisville, West Virginia, is a large solar energy system that will help power the 320,000 square foot building we have there. PACTIV Evergreen, a world leader in plastic food packaging, operates their distribution facility there. As more and more companies demand that all or part of their energy needs are met through sustainable resources, we have prepared ourselves to meet that goal. We completed a significant project to utilize a large portion of our remaining property in Davisville to create two build-ready sites. The 15- and 7-acre sites have been engineered by Pickering Associates, permitted and graded and ready to build on.



Davisville, West Virginia solar energy system.

We believe that our future is bright. We believe that we have a message that will resonate when we have the opportunity to deliver it in front of the right people. Because the Polymer Alliance Zone believes in West Virginia, we will succeed. **V**