

## Indianapolis Economic Development Inc. boasts job-creation success

If Indianapolis Economic Development Inc. CEO Scott Miller ever feels like a refrigerator salesman at the North Pole, he's not letting on. In the worst recession since the Great Depression, it must be difficult to broker business expansions. But Miller's making no excuses for the city's job creation and retention figures. In fact, he's touting them.

"In any given economy, somebody's going to have their best year ever," he said. "We're trying to find these companies and help them grow."

Miller took charge of IEDI a year ago for Republican Mayor Greg Ballard. So far in 2009, IEDI reports it has completed 30 projects, resulting in 2,295 new jobs created as of Sept. 14. IEDI's efforts this year have also retained 3,476 jobs at businesses that considered moving elsewhere. And Miller said IEDI's activities have convinced companies to make \$132.9 million in local capital investments.

Still, the numbers are down from 2006, the best year for local economic development in recent memory, when the city landed \$625.9 million in capital investments from businesses that created 4,921 new jobs and retained 14,207 more.

Miller, who commands a staff of 10, points to success stories such as the expansions of locally based AIT Laboratories, BioStorage Technologies, Comlux Corp. and StreetLinks National Appraisal Services. IEDI had a hand in all their expansions.

IEDI hasn't propped up its numbers by using lavish incentives.

Under Miller, IEDI has been downright stingy with tax abatements, attracting \$18.01 on average in private investment for every \$1 of property-tax exemption authorized. That's much higher than the ratio under Ballard's Democratic predecessor Bart Peterson, when the amount of private investment gained per \$1 ranged in various years from \$3.39 to \$15.89.