



**WORLD TRADE CENTER**  
**KANSAS CITY** at UNION STATION



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**KC Business and Civic Leadership Focus on International Opportunities**

*World Trade Center Kansas City will become key resource for area businesses*

March 2, 2011 - Four of the Kansas City region's leading business organizations are forming a strategic partnership to develop the World Trade Center Kansas City at Union Station.

The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, the International Trade Council of Greater Kansas City, the Kansas City Area Development Council and KC SmartPort have committed to a collaborative effort to raise the value of World Trade Center Kansas City. The World Trade Center will be housed within the Chamber's new offices at Union Station, where all four collaborating organizations will be located.

Union Station also will serve as the venue for the partnership's first formal event, the World Trade Centers Association's North America Regional Meeting May 16-17, where executives from nearly 60 World Trade Centers within North America will gather for their annual planning meeting.

Several other recent and coming programs involving the World Trade Center partners include a session last week led by the Fred Hochberg, president of the Export-Import Bank of the United States, a delegation of more than 100 Chamber members that will be going to China in March, and support of the Futurallia global business match-making event coming to Bartle Hall in May.

"We believe expanding global trade relationships will be a key factor in growing the Kansas City regional economy over time," said James A. Heeter, president and CEO, the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce. "The Kansas City metropolitan area already exports nearly \$9 billion a year in goods and services, nearly 10 percent of gross regional product. That's a lot. But we think it can be much more."

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The World Trade Center Kansas City's services will include hosting and mounting trade missions and events, educating regional trade professionals and providing a variety of other services to help businesses large and small develop new trade relationships.

"This collaborative effort will open new markets for regional companies, creating growth and new jobs for our region," said Bob Marcusse, president and CEO, Kansas City Area Development Council (KCADC).

KCADC will assist a combined branding and marketing effort to raise awareness of World Trade Center Kansas City regionally with KC area business as well as around the world.

"We are thrilled that World Trade Center Kansas City will be based at Union Station," said Mike Haverty, executive chairman of Kansas City Southern Industries and chairman of the board, Kansas City Union Station. "This collaboration will further leverage an iconic facility as a hub of commerce for the region, which fits so well with its original purpose."

One key element of the World Trade Center is to develop a work force of professionals who are well versed in doing business in global markets.

"The ITC is a volunteer-based organization supported by people who are experts in their fields willing to give their time to help spur international business growth," said Tina Roth, president of the International Trade Council. "We see this partnership as a golden opportunity to truly collaborate for the betterment of the community."

The Kansas City region will thrive in an increasingly global business market due to this collaborative commitment to create a stronger, more effective World Trade Center Kansas City. The international credibility that a robust World Trade Center brings will only strengthen an already solid business case for international investment in Kansas City.

"The KC region's location and supply chain infrastructure allow for the growth in international trade and a stronger World Trade Center brings everything in focus," said Chris Gutierrez, president, KC SmartPort.

#### **About World Trade Center Kansas City**

World Trade Center Kansas City serves domestic and international companies within the Kansas City region as well as international companies that want to do business in Kansas City. It supports the international business education and training needs of the region offering a variety of services from internships to networking events and seminars. World Trade Center Kansas City also assists companies by taking advantage of existing assets in our region to increase exports and to procure goods and services from international markets.

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## WORLD TRADE CENTER KANSAS CITY at UNION STATION



A collaborative effort is underway to dramatically elevate Kansas City's international business opportunities and invigorate World Trade Center Kansas City. The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, International Trade Council of Greater Kansas City, KC SmartPort, and the Kansas City Area Development Council will help to open new markets for regional companies and do even more to educate area trade professionals. World Trade Center Kansas City will be housed in iconic Union Station, with its rich history as a meeting place and hub for travelers from all over the world.

Each World Trade Center Kansas City partner organization will have a unique and important role:

- The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce has established a crucial foundation and will continue to promote The World Trade Center Kansas City to serve domestic and international companies within the Kansas City region as well as international companies that want to do business in Kansas City. [kcchamber.com](http://kcchamber.com)
- The International Trade Council of Greater Kansas City (ITCKC) will continue to provide important services to support professional development and educational outreach in the community. ITCKC will support the continued development and growth of trade services, educational activities and networking events catered toward the business and academic communities. [itckc.org](http://itckc.org)
- To assist domestic and international companies within the KC region, we will leverage the expertise and industry connections of KC SmartPort, the regional authority on supply chain solutions. KC SmartPort will be able to assist companies by taking advantage of existing assets in our region to increase exports and to procure goods and services from international markets. [kcsmartport.com](http://kcsmartport.com)
- The Kansas City Area Development Council will assist with branding, website management and regional marketing of World Trade Center Kansas City to increase its visibility with companies in the KC area and globally. As companies utilize the services provided by the World Trade Center to gain new international contracts and partnerships, the companies will grow and create new jobs within the region. [thinkkc.com](http://thinkkc.com)

