



## ChamberBrief - GACCoM's monthly e-Newsletter

German American Chamber of Commerce of the Midwest, Inc. (GACCoM)

December 2011 Issue

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### A Lot to Report at Year-End!

As many of us are getting ready to leave for the holidays, we at GACCoM want to take this opportunity to thank all our members, friends, and supporters for a great and eventful year! We are looking back at countless exciting programs and initiatives, none of which would have been possible without you.

This ChamberBrief issue gives you an overview of the happenings of the past two months - but keep an eye out for our Highlights Brochure in January, to relive all the best moments of the year, from the Economic Forum and the MERLIN Awards Gala, to Germany's Best & Oktoberfest to the Christkindlmarket. Yet, great events weren't limited to the Chicago-area in 2011. We would also like to thank our four local chapters in Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Colorado for an active year and many programs serving the German-American business community all throughout the Midwest.

**We hope that all of you have a great Holiday Season and that we will see you again soon at new exciting programs in the New Year!**

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Your GACCoM Team

VIP Guests at the Chamber

FRAGOMEN



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**GACCoM welcomed Dr. Volker Treier and Dr. Sara Borella (3rd and 4th from right), both from the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK) in Chicago on December 1st.**

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Dr. Volker Treier was appointed Deputy CEO and MD of

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International Economic Affairs of the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK) in January 2011. In this function, he is responsible for the coordination of 120 German Chamber locations in 80 countries worldwide. In December, Dr. Treier visited the three main Chamber locations in the U.S.: Atlanta, Chicago, and New York. While in Chicago, he met with GACCoM board members, the heads of German subsidiaries, and other members of the local business community, including representatives of the Federal Reserve Bank, the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, the German Consulate General, the Goethe Institut, and Germany Trade & Invest. The last stop of Dr. Treier's trip was New York, where he commented on the results of the German American Business Outlook at the New York Stock Exchange:

*"While German firms are not immune to a potential confidence crisis, they are still planning - on a very high level - to invest and employ, not only in Germany but also abroad",* Dr. Treier summarized the outlook for 2012.

**(More about the German American Business Outlook below)**

### Upcoming Events

- **Open through December 24 - Christkindlmarket Chicago**  
daily through 12/24/2011, in Chicago, IL, Daley Plaza
- **Open through December 23 - Denver Christkindlmarket**  
daily through 12/23/2011, in Denver, CO, Skyline Park
- **YEC Monthly Stammtisch**  
12/21/2011 at the Dana Hotel and Spa, Chicago, IL
- **Michigan Chapter New Year's Gala 2012**  
01/17/2012 in Dearborn, MI
- **Annual Economic Forum**  
01/26/2012 in Rosemont, IL (near O'Hare airport)

**The German American Chambers of Commerce (GACCs) and the Representative of German Industry and Trade (RGIT) kick off the new year with a discussion on the transatlantic economic outlook.**

#### Confirmed Speakers:

*Prof. Dr. Joachim Scheide* from the Kiel Institute for the World Economy

*Diane Swonk*, Chief Economist from Mesirow Financial  
*Gerhard Kiewel*, Vice President- Group Controlling & Accounting of Volkswagen Group of America, Inc.

*Norbert G. Riedel*, Corporate Vice President and Chief Science & Innovation Officer of Baxter International, Inc.

**Our Moderator:***Michael Backfisch*, Middle East Correspondent

Registration and sponsorship opportunities now available at [www.gaccomm.org/economic-forum2012](http://www.gaccomm.org/economic-forum2012)

**German American Business Outlook Survey 2011****In uncertain times, German firms in the U.S. stand for optimism**

2011 was an extremely successful year for German businesses in the United States. Despite the current economic and political uncertainty in both the U.S. and Europe, the firms also remain outspokenly optimistic about their outlook for 2012. 86% of German subsidiaries expect moderate to strong growth for their operations in the New Year, including 67 % that plan to create additional jobs.



When the results of the third German American Business Outlook survey were presented to the media at the New York Stock Exchange on December 5, 2011, for some, the outcome sounded almost too good to be true: Five high-spirited industry representatives informed the audience about their companies' excellent performance in 2011, and their optimistic and ambitious outlook for 2012 - which so far remains mostly untainted by economic and political uncertainty in the U.S. and Europe.

Their recent positive business development allowed 55% of German subsidiaries to add staff in 2011 and 67% of companies plan to create further jobs in the year ahead. However, 60% currently have difficulty finding candidates with the right skill set for their openings on the U.S. labor market, making skills shortages one of the major business challenges for 2012.

Right: GACCoM Board Members at the press conference at the New York Stock Exchange: Juergen Reers of Roland Berger Strategy Consultants (left) summarized the overall survey results, while Norbert Weichele of Zentis Food Solutions provided a Midwestern industry perspective.



The complete results, videos, and pictures of the survey presentation at the New York Stock Exchange are available at: [www.ahk-usa.com/gabo](http://www.ahk-usa.com/gabo)

**Find, Train, Retain - A Panel Discussion on the Skilled Workforce Challenge**

On November 17, GACCoM organized a very well-received panel discussion on how to mediate skilled workforce shortages in manufacturing. Four panelists, each from highly-specialized manufacturing firms, gave insights into different types of training initiatives they have established at their respective facilities. From innovative recruitment and employee motivation strategies, to 3-year training programs shaped after the German apprenticeship model, to the establishment of a brand new corporate training academy - the audience had the chance to learn about many approaches and to engage in lively discussions with the panelists.





The panelists (from left): Markus Schyboll, CEO of Schunk North America, Geoffrey Somary, President and CEO of Ipsen, Dr. Walter Maisel, President & CEO of KOSTAL of North America (all three GACCoM Board Members), Martin Saur, Director of Manufacturing at Bekum America Corp. with Simone Pohl, President & CEO of GACCoM

**We will be happy to put you in touch with our panelists for further discussion**

### More on the Skilled Workforce Challenge

Many of you have told us how important this topic is to your business, so the Chamber wants to offer even more related content and opportunities in the New Year: Starting 2012, the German American Trade Magazine will include a feature on "**Anything But Dirty - 21st Century Manufacturing Jobs**", showcasing today's work environments and career opportunities in manufacturing. If your company is interested in being featured, simply [contact us](#).

**Always find the latest on upcoming programs and related news items at [www.gaccomm.org/skills](http://www.gaccomm.org/skills).**

Related insights from the above-mentioned German American Business Outlook survey, such as retention measures and training initiatives offered by German companies in the U.S. are now also available for download on this page.

### Other Recent Events in Chicago

#### RSNA German Night Networking Reception hosted by GACCoM and Fraunhofer, November 29, 2011

If you missed our networking reception and the presentation of the German Hightech Champions Award in medical imaging by Fraunhofer, you can [meet the award winners online](#).

#### Sweets and Snacks Business Delegation, December 5-8, 2011

Visit [www.gaccomm.org/sweetsandsnacks](http://www.gaccomm.org/sweetsandsnacks) to learn about the seven German delegation companies from the sweets and snacks industry that visited Chicago in early December to explore opportunities on the US-market.

### GACCoM on the Road

While we're happy to see many of you regularly at our programs in Chicago, we want to make sure to keep you in the loop on our events all across the Midwest and our staff's travels across the pond as well. Here is what our team has been up to over the last couple of months:

#### December 9, 2011

GACCoM CEO Simone Pohl and Membership Director Jayne Riemer-Chishty mingled with the local German-American business community on the occasion of [GACCoM's Minnesota Chapter's Annual Holiday Reception](#)  
**More at [www.gaccomm-mn.org](http://www.gaccomm-mn.org)**

**December 8, 2011** Director of Consulting Services, Virginia Rounds, presented at the [Indiana Economic Developers Annual Conference](#) in Indianapolis

#### December 5, 2011

GACCoM's management and PR-teams were in New York City for the [Presentation of the German American Business Outlook results](#) at the New York Stock Exchange  
**Find the full results of the study, press coverage, videos, and pictures at [www.ahk-usa.com/gabo](http://www.ahk-usa.com/gabo)**

#### November 16-18, 2011

Mark Tomkins, GACCoM's VP and medical technology expert payed a visit to the [Medica trade show](#) in Düsseldorf, Germany

#### November 16, 2011

Virginia Rounds and Werner Gruenberg met Michigan's local business community at the [GACCoM Michigan Chapter's Fall Dinner](#)

#### **November 14-17, 2011**

The Energy Efficiency team was out and about for the [Energy Efficiency Innovation Seminars: Logistics & Transportation](#) at four Midwestern Universities

**More at [www.gaccomm.org/InnovSemLog&Trans2011](http://www.gaccomm.org/InnovSemLog&Trans2011)**

#### **November 10, 2011**

With the first [German American Water Forum](#), our Energy Efficiency team brought a GACCoM industry premiere to Cincinnati, OH. The two-day conference series organized jointly with Germany Trade & Invest kicked off in Chicago two days earlier and featured German and US experts reporting on water efficiency technologies in industry.

**Find videos and presentations at [www.gaccomm.org/waterwebcast](http://www.gaccomm.org/waterwebcast)**

#### **November 9, 2011**

GACCoM CEO Simone Pohl traveled to Berlin where she attended the [Bi-Annual "AHK Beirat" Meeting, a strategy committee](#) formed by representatives of the worldwide AHK (German Chambers Abroad) network. While in the capital, Simone also met with the German Federal Government's new Coordinator for Transatlantic Cooperation, Harald Leibrecht, as well as with representatives of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, the Chambers' umbrella organization - the DIHK, and Germany Trade & Invest.

#### **October 30 - November 7, 2011**

Daniela Daus and her team toured Germany with the [Transatlantic Program -Young Technology Leaders](#). The topic of the third delegation trip in 2011 was Water Management.

**More at [www.transatlanticprogram.org](http://www.transatlanticprogram.org)**

#### **October 25, 2011**

Our Renewable Energy team brought a delegation of German companies in the bio energy industry to Madison, WI for the [Bio Energy Conference and Delegation](#)

**Videos and presentations are available at [www.gaccomm.org/biowebcast](http://www.gaccomm.org/biowebcast)**

#### **October 18-20, 2011**

Several of GACCoM's consultants toured the Midwest for the ["Doing Business in Germany" Event Series with Germany Trade & Invest](#) that stopped in Indianapolis, Minneapolis, and Kansas City

#### **October 18, 2011**

Consultant and Member of GACCoM's eMobility team, Christian Goetz, visited [eCarTec 2011 in Munich](#)

#### **October 8-12, 2011**

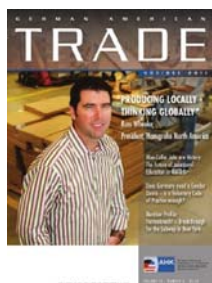
GACCoM food industry experts Virginia Rounds and Werner Gruenberg visited the [ANUGA trade show in Cologne, Germany](#)

#### **October 4 - December 22, 2011**

GACCoM Consultant Christian Goetz completed a [three-months stay at the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Swabia \(IHK Schwaben\)](#), where he worked on projects in the international trade department.

**We look forward to welcoming Christian back at the Chicago office in the New Year!**

#### **German American Trade Magazine**



Just a reminder that the November/December issue of the German American Trade Magazine is available for you online.

- [Online Flipbook Access \(Members only\)](#)
- [PDF-Download](#)

**NEW:** For the first time, our members also have access to an **electronic flipbook version of the GACC National Membership Directory**. Just [click here](#) and browse the information of over 2,000 GACC members. (Personal Member Log-In is required.)

## 2012 Sponsorship Packages

Sponsorship Packages for 2012 are now available! [Browse our current options](#) or [contact us](#) directly to discuss individual solutions tailored to your company's marketing objectives.

## Last But Not Least...

If you have comments or suggestions, please contact our Director, Membership and Chamber Development, Jayne Riemer-Chishty, at [riemer-chishty@gaccomm.org](mailto:riemer-chishty@gaccomm.org) or call 312-494-2169. We value your opinion!

Please visit our [website](#) for more information and pictures from recent GACCoM events.

Best regards,  
Your GACCoM Team

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