

Binational Regional Innovation and Collaboration Team Targets Lasting Impact with Two Binational Agreements

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MOU Signing (left to right):

Paul Brake, *Chair of the I-69 International Trade Corridor NMDC and City Manager for the City of Grand Blanc*

Ben Erulker, *Vice President of Economic Development for the Detroit Regional Chamber*

John Grace, *Vice Chair of SWEA and Deputy Mayor of Goderich*

Peter White, *Western University* (back left)

J.D. Snyder, *Michigan State University CCED* (back right)

The MSU CCED's Binational Regional Innovation and Collaboration team facilitated two innovative and impactful binational agreements this year that target economic development through binational regional collaboration. The project team, led by CCED Project Director J. D. Snyder, assumed the

lead role in organizing, rationalizing, and facilitating the agreements signed by key stakeholders in Michigan and southwest Ontario.

The first agreement was a binational memorandum of understanding (MOU), signed by the I-69 International Trade Corridor Next Michigan Corporation and the Southwest (Ontario) Economic Alliance on June 11 in Sarnia, Ontario at the second Binational Blue Water Corridor Conference. This MOU targets binational development initiatives in regionally significant economic sectors including:

- bio-manufacturing and green chemistry
- lightweight automotive materials, and
- agri-food production and processing.

Just three months later, two bio-economy visionaries, Lansing-based [MBI](#) and Ontario-based [Bioindustrial Innovation Canada](#), took a significant step in furthering collaboration by [signing an innovative agreement](#) to share and coordinate bio-based research and agendas. The signing took place September 26, 2014 in Lansing, Michigan.

This effort is intended to further leverage scarce resources and build on a broader range of knowledge assets in Michigan and southwest Ontario.

This landmark agreement establishes a clear framework for coordinated research to expedite development and commercialization of bio-based chemicals and materials, along with raising awareness of the bio-manufacturing and green chemistry sectors in the binational region of

Michigan and southwest Ontario. This agreement represents an important step in creating a global knowledge and research network that starts with these pioneering institutions in Michigan and Ontario.

The MSU CCED Binational Regional Innovation and Collaboration team is excited to be continuing its work on binational regional collaboration through 2015 and is looking forward to co-hosting the Binational Meet the Buyer event on April 22, 2015. To learn more, visit <http://meetthebuyer.weebly.com/>.