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## **2018: Reflecting on a year of growth at Quonset - by Steven King**

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The continued success of the Quonset Business Park in 2018 is in part a testament to the broad range of businesses that call Quonset home. As the year comes to a close, Quonset is now home to over 200 companies and nearly 12,000 full and part-time jobs, including one out of every seven manufacturing jobs in Rhode Island. This year we welcomed two new exciting businesses to the park, another company with a long history at Quonset announced a major expansion, and 500 new full and part-time jobs were added, with many more planned.

This past April, Governor Gina Raimondo joined us at the ribbon cutting of Finlays USA's new 28,800 s/f, state-of-the-art, global research and development center. Finlays is a global leader in the development and distribution of tea and coffee extracts, and owns the iconic local brand Autocrat coffee syrup. Finlays has committed to hiring additional employees by 2019 and maintaining these jobs in Rhode Island for at least 12 years.

Quonset also welcomed Infinity Meat Solutions, a subsidiary of Ahold Delhaize, parent company of Stop and Shop, to the business park with a groundbreaking this fall. The state-of-the-art 200,000 s/f protein packaging facility is slated to bring 700 new jobs to Rhode Island. Infinity Meat Solutions leads the market in providing pre-packaged deli meats to grocery stores throughout the country.

Meanwhile, Electric Boat broke ground on an expansion of their Quonset facility this past fall – a major step forward for both the Business Park and the Rhode Island economy. The ongoing \$792 million expansion will create and support 1,300 new jobs in Rhode Island.

Another company on Quonset's waterfront, J. Goodison Co., saw remarkable growth this year. The U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Division (MARAD) provided the company with a \$635,453 federal grant last year, facilitating the purchase of a new wastewater collection and treatment system for their shipyard here. The new system helps the shipyard operate more efficiently and is environmentally friendly.

U.S. Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI) announced in April that the Port of Davisville was selected by the U.S.

Department of Transportation to join a new maritime highway initiative. This development represents a tremendous opportunity for the shipyard and our Port of Davisville. The Marine Highway Project will position Davisville to grow a container shipping operation and collaborate with the Ports of Brooklyn and Newark.

This year, we welcomed new companies to the Flex Industrial Campus at the business park, the first of its kind in the region. The building has three units, each around 10,000 s/f total including a state-of-the-art office – about 1,600 s/f, and commercial manufacturing and warehouse space – about 8,000 s/f. The first flex space building is now fully leased, and construction of the second building has begun. The flex campus will allow new companies to make their home at Quonset without the cost and time of developing their own facilities.

Quonset Development Corporation (QDC) was proud to affirm our commitment to clean energy this year. We received the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources 2018 Leading by Example Energy Award for our efforts to implement energy efficiency measures. The QDC offices, as well as various facilities throughout the Business Park, are now 100% powered by solar energy.

In September, in collaboration with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, we unveiled a 22-acre athletic field complex for the Town of North Kingstown. The fields, which reflect our commitment to our host community, are available for use now by North Kingstown residents and will be utilized by the town's youth lacrosse leagues this coming spring.

Quonset's successes this year reflect the Quonset team's determination to continue our role as Rhode Island's leading driver of economic development and job growth. We look forward to continuing this momentum in the year ahead.

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