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## Amgen expands its supply center

### Kentucky city will likely see more jobs

By Allison Bruce [abruce@VenturaCountyStar.com](mailto:abruce@VenturaCountyStar.com)  
December 19, 2006

Amgen Inc. is spending \$38 million to expand its distribution center in Louisville, Ky., to increase its drug-shipping capacity in anticipation of company growth.

It is the company's only U.S. distribution center. Another one is located in Breda, Netherlands, to handle distribution outside the United States.

Amgen's manufacturing facilities send drugs to the 16-acre Louisville center, which opened in 1992 and now employs about 40 people. The drugs are then loaded and shipped to where they are needed.

The expansion and improvement project will add 2,700 square feet to an existing building. Plans call for a new walk-in freezer, two new cold rooms, upgrades to existing cold rooms and other upgrades. The facility is compliant with U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations and should be completed in 2007.

Amgen likely will hire "several additional staff members" once the expansion is complete, but

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the exact number has not been determined, said Mary Klem, an Amgen spokeswoman.

She added that the company relies on many local businesses for transportation, packaging and other services.

Louisville is a popular place for distribution centers because United Parcel Service's international airfreight hub is based there, making it a logical logistics center for many companies. Amgen's biotech rival Genentech opened a distribution center there earlier this year.

Louisville competes for distribution business with Memphis, where FedEx's transportation hub is located.

Thousand Oaks-based Amgen selected Louisville for its U.S. distribution after researching the business climate, transportation services and other infrastructure. And ongoing community cooperation and support went into the decision to proceed with the expansion project.

At a groundbreaking ceremony Monday, Louisville Mayor Jerry Abramson called Amgen a "valued corporate citizen."

"Thanks to the joint efforts of state and local leaders and our business partners in Louisville, we have a favorable business climate that allows quality companies like Amgen to expand their businesses in our community," he said.

Kentucky Gov. Ernie Fletcher, U.S. Sen. Jim Bunning and other community leaders attended the event.

Louisville wants healthcare biz

Louisville focuses on attracting three sectors in the health industry, according to Tom McMahon, interim executive director of Health Enterprises Network Louisville. The organization, made up of more than 170 member companies, works to attract, retain and grow health-related companies.

Healthcare is one of the area's largest industries, employing about 10 percent of the region's work force and providing about \$2 billion in

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annual salaries, according to the Health Enterprises Network.

Healthcare services, such as insurance, care homes and hospital management, make up the biggest part of the area's healthcare industry, followed by life sciences logistics and life sciences research and development.

McMahon said because Louisville focuses on these segments of the healthcare business, it listens to company needs and acts on those, such as zoning or taxes. The community colleges offer training programs and certificates required by the companies. The area also has a large work force that specializes in the life sciences industry to work in warehouses, engineering and other capacities.

For Louisville, life sciences distribution attracts higher quality jobs, McMahon said. Because companies have stringent requirements to handle products they store and ship, there is more demand for trained employees who command higher salaries.

"Clearly, when we're attracting jobs in the distribution space, we're more interested in attracting jobs in their areas than others," McMahon said.

Amgen's expansion and the addition of Genentech's distribution center serve as validation that Louisville's strategy is paying off, McMahon said.

**Big year for Amgen**

This has been a year of growth for Amgen. The company has beefed up its research and development spending to about \$3 billion this year, \$1 billion more than last year. That has meant some expansion of research and development locations and new hires.

The company also has announced several manufacturing expansions, including the addition of a new location outside of Cork, Ireland, and expanding its manufacturing facilities in Puerto Rico.

The company also launched a new drug this year, Vectibix, which is used to help treat colorectal cancer. The company anticipates growing demand for its existing drugs and new drugs that will come on the market.

The expansion of the manufacturing facilities was important for Amgen to ensure its ability to supply patients with its drugs, Klem said.

On the Net:

<http://www.amgen.com>

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