

TCD Promoting New Website

Western Nebraska has a great problem ... more jobs than workers.

That's why Twin Cities Development (TCD) is working to get the word out about its new website, <http://wehavejobs.net>

The website, which was unveiled three months ago, is designed to help employers find employees as well as promote the Scottsbluff/Gering community.

TCD Employee Recruitment Manager Darla Heggem says while past efforts have focused on creating jobs, the area now has ample employment opportunities.

"Right now, on our website, we have over 200 jobs posted and that's with about 35 employers having their jobs posted," says Heggem. "So certainly we have an over abundance of job opportunities here in the valley."

Heggem says they are waiting on marketing funds to help further promote the website. She says they also want to do some work with local alumni groups to encourage graduates and former residents from the area to return home and take advantage of these job opportunities.

Darnell Named TCD Board

President

Twin Cities Development named Brenda Darnell it's board president for the upcoming year, at today's annual meeting at the Harms Advanced Technology Center.

Over the past year, Twin Cities Development has become no longer only about Economic Development.

As the board selected a new president for the upcoming year, TCD showed it's membership why workforce development and housing development are also a big part in attracting new businesses.

Darnell says when it comes to attracting new people and businesses, it's the community selling itself.

'A single individual doesn't sell the area. It's really the community sellilng itself," Darnell said. "Just because we have the availability of a job, that doesn't mean that's going to have somebody come into our community and stay in the community.

TCD has always done well bringing in businesses. This year it created wehavejobs.net, to attract employees.

Not only does the site post job openings, it also shows what there is to do in the Panhandle.

~KOTA News

AIM's Careerlink to Help Spur Growth in Western Nebraska

The AIM Institute has embarked on a new kind of partnership that is proving to be a great service to both the Scottsbluff/Gering community and the AIM Institute. Twin Cities Development Association has signed an agreement to help provide and subsidize AIM's CareerLink job-posting services for its small- and medium-sized members. This opens up a new employee recruiting avenue for businesses that normally would not post on the Internet. And, it gives CareerLink the ability to provide its services in the Scottsbluff/Gering area in a more comprehensive manner, says Tim Erickson, business development director for the AIM Institute.

site.

"It's a challenge that both entities are excited about tackling," Erickson says.

CareerLink, which has focused on expanding its services across Nebraska, is now working with 26 western Nebraska companies posting jobs on the site. The partnership has served to kick start the effort, providing the critical mass of jobs needed to capture the attention of job seekers. Some of the region's larger employers including Cabela's and Regional West Medical have joined in the effort to make this project even more successful.

This partnership provides AIM's Careerlink a new market, new jobs, and a new area of workers, helping AIM fulfill its mission by addressing workforce needs more extensively across the state. For the Scottsbluff/Gering community, the partnership provides cost-efficient Internet job-posting services that help a vastly underserved population work effectively toward its growth goals.

This agreement may also serve as a pilot for other communities in Nebraska. North Platte, Auburn, Seward and other communities in the central and southeastern regions of the state have inquired about similar arrangements that can help them expand their economic development opportunities. The potential is there to form partnerships throughout the state. The Twin Cities Development Association and CareerLink agreement is just the beginning.

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TCD Assisting with workforce-related issues

Workforce issues are changing the focus of economic development efforts in the North Platte Valley, according to executives with Twin Cities Development. While past efforts have focused on creating jobs, the area now abounds with employers looking for 'well-qualified' employees. During the organization's annual membership meeting on Thursday, newly elected board President Brenda Darnell, who served as vice president of the board last year, said she is excited to be serving on the board and is looking forward to more development in the valley.

"From an economic perspective in the community, I think that we have a lot of challenges and a lot of opportunities," she said. "We've done some things that are a little more

creative, this last year, as opposed to traditional economic development, and I'm really looking forward to having the opportunity to support and continue those projects."

Darnell said there is no magic wand to produce instant manufacturing and everything takes time to develop.

In addition, she said while many believe that this area shouldn't rely only on agriculture, she believes agriculture should continue to be developed but not be the sole source of jobs.

"We do need to continue to support (agriculture) but I think there are a lot of opportunities that we have, with the work ethic people in this region possess, and that does give us the opportunity to pursue other businesses outside of agriculture," said Darnell. While she couldn't be specific, Darnell said, there are a number of projects being worked on.

"We've had different inquiries from companies that are outside of the agriculture area; sometimes those come to fruition, sometimes we put a lot of work into the background and they don't. We always try to learn from the experience if we finish up in second."

During the meeting, it was discussed that worker shortage is critical in some local industries.

Darnell said TCD is trying to assist with that with its new web site designed to help employers find employees as well as those in the work force who are trying to find the right job.

Other board members elected include Eileen Ely as vice president and Howard Olsen as secretary/treasurer.

The group also recognized the work of outgoing board members Own Palm, Stan Walker and Steve Olsen.

TCD Director Rawnda Pierce said she believes that the overall picture of economic development in the valley continues to

develop

However, the question on many people's minds: When?

"We have projects going on all the time and we are always trying to diversify," Pierce said. "...We have some projects that are in the works that would be different from call center jobs.

"We are always trying to up the standard and employment base so that people have different jobs to go to but we are working on (bringing in new jobs) constantly."

~by Roger Holsinger, Assistant Editor

Star Herald News

Scottsbluff Receives Economic Development Certification

Scottsbluff is now one of 16 communities in the state that has gained economic development certification from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. The D.E.D named Scottsbluff as one of the four most recent communities to gain the certification. Scottsbluff City Manager Rick Kuckkahn says the work by Twin Cities Development in completing the rigorous application process allows Scottsbluff to stand out as a community prepared to accept new business.

In certifying Scottsbluff, the D.E.D. noted Scottsbluff was one of the first communities to approve an L.B. 840 program

and sales tax to help grow new and expanding businesses. Since its passage more than \$3.8 million in incentives have helped create or retain more than 775 jobs in the area. D.E.D. also noted Twin Cites Development has provided \$292,000 in state grant funds to help 25 area families purchase homes and has established an innovative web site to attract a work force to western Nebraska.

The certification program is sponsored by the Nebraska Diplomats.

~article courtesy of Kevin Mooney
KNEB News