



# Growing Interest in North Dakota

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## GOVERNOR HOSTS RECEPTION AT CHICAGO'S ADLER PLANETARIUM

March 18-21, the Department of Commerce (DOC) had its first experience as an exhibitor during National Manufacturing Week at McCormick Place in Chicago. The event — actually four shows in one — attracts more than 1,800 exhibitors and 45,000 attendees each year.

ND Gov. John Hoeven, DOC staff, and local economic developers hosted a reception Wed., March 20, at the Adler Planetarium. Business developers handed out invitations at the DOC exhibit booth. More than 50 manufacturers and other business guests attended the reception.

Communities joining the DOC to host the trade show booth or attend the reception included Bismarck-Mandan, Dickinson, Fargo, Grand Forks, Minot, Rolla, Rugby, Tioga and Wahpeton. Participating state legislators include Rep. Bob Skarphol, Rep. Mike Timm, and Sen. Ken Solberg.

The DOC is grateful to the following individuals and companies for attending the reception to provide exhibits, personal testimony, and interactive



This poster and the logo, "A Universe of Opportunity," welcomed the Governor's Chicago reception attendees to the Adler Planetarium.

opportunities to promote doing business in North Dakota:

- **Grover Riebe**, Bobcat (Gwinner)
- **Rick Kasper and Jim Ramstad**, GEM Car (Fargo)
- **Dennis Gladen and Jennifer Waymire**, Imation (Wahpeton)
- **Jim and Lori Stadum**, Samsara Pool Cues (Rugby) ■

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## "DIRECTORS' ROAD TRIPS" TAKE DOC STAFF ACROSS STATE

Department of Commerce (DOC) commissioner Lee Peterson and DOC division directors Linda Butts (ED&F), Paul Govig (Community Services), Jim Hirsch (Workforce Development), and Allan Stenehjelm (Tourism) or their designees have begun visits to various North Dakota towns and cities. During the visits, the staff publicly commend the efforts of local economic developers to market their areas for business expansion or relocation. The visits also provide a chance to meet with community leaders and legislators to discuss economic development issues.

- **Feb. 7: Rugby and Devils Lake.** Announcement of Partners in Marketing grants for the Rugby Jobs Development Authority (JDA) and the Devils Lake Region Partnership.
- **March 7: Mayville.** Announcement of a \$5,000 grant to the Mayville-Portland Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Board and surrounding community EDCs for the creation of regional marketing materials. The staff also toured the Technology Center on the Mayville State University campus. (See *Partners in Marketing story* for complete list of EDCs.)
- **April 17: Dickinson.** Announcement of successful grant proposal by eight communities

(article continued on next page)

forming the Southwest Region Developers: \$20,000 to create marketing materials to attract business prospects to that area of the state. ■

most lucrative travel market: "touring." The touring market is comprised of adults age 35-54 who are married and educated. This group tends to spend more than many others when traveling. ■

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## DOC BEGINS STRATEGIC PLANNING

All four divisions of the Department of Commerce (DOC) met Feb. 20 for the first in a series of strategic planning meetings. Jim Kaiser, Bank of North Dakota, facilitated the half-day session at which staff discussed the challenge of becoming a unified agency.

"The expectations placed on the DOC are tremendous. Our task is nothing less than to improve the standard of living for North Dakotans," said DOC commissioner Lee Peterson. "At the same time, we need to recognize how far we've come and the high degree of knowledge, perseverance, and flexibility the staff has demonstrated."

Communication was the key issue. A unanimous priority for the DOC leaders was to create a more formal process for exchanging information and communicating division activities throughout the DOC. In addition, staff recognized the need to communicate more consistently with department stakeholders and the general public.

Paul Govig, director of DOC's Community Services Division, will lead the strategic planning effort, holding twice-yearly strategic sessions and monthly DOC division head meetings. ■

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## DOC TOURISM DIVISION COURTS NEW TRAVEL MARKET

Tourism in North Dakota will get a boost this year with a new image and promotion campaign. The branding campaign emphasizes what makes North Dakota unique: a rich culture and history on a backdrop of scenic beauty, with fun things to see and do.

"Legendary" is the state's new tourism slogan, and the campaign is meant to appeal to a new market. Although ND has saturated the "visiting friends and relatives" segment of the travel market, the state scores 11 percent below the national average in the

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## QVC INVITES ND BUSINESSES TO JOIN NATIONAL PRODUCT SEARCH

Aspiring entrepreneurs will have the opportunity to present their consumer products to QVC at the e-commerce leader's national product search on Saturday, April 27, and Sunday, April 28, at the Mall of America in Bloomington, MN.

"Almost everyone dreams of creating their own business or developing a new product," said Linda Butts, ED&F director. "North Dakotans are well recognized for their innovative spirit, and we hope many of them will travel to the Mall of America and showcase their products to the QVC representatives."

Each potential vendor will have the opportunity to meet with a QVC representative to "audition" his or her product or prototype. Advance registration is necessary to schedule and confirm an appointment. More information and registration forms can be obtained at <[www.QVCproductsearch.com](http://www.QVCproductsearch.com)> or toll-free at 1-866-302-4633. ■

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## SPECIALTY EVENT SAVORED AT OUTSOURCING WORLD SUMMIT

ED&F is historically the only state economic development organization to participate in the Outsourcing World Summit in Lake Buena Vista, FL. This year, the state went beyond being an exhibitor and hosted a special reception Feb. 18 at the Lake Buena Vista Yacht and Beach Club.

Economic developers from ED&F, Bismarck-Mandan, Grand Forks, and the Griggs-Steele Empowerment Zone hosted the event.

About 25 business professionals attended, and ED&F business development project manager Sandy Opp

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met some good prospects, especially from the Minneapolis area. "Three years of involvement with this conference have strengthened my confidence that this is the right place for us to market outsourcing opportunities to high-level companies," Opp said. ■

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#### FUTURE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT EVENTS

The ED&F business development team will host all of the events listed below, many in conjunction with DOC Commissioner Lee Peterson. For more information, contact ED&F vice president for business development Mike Strotheide, 701-328-5322, [mstrothe@state.nd.us](mailto:mstrothe@state.nd.us).

- **May 4-8: CoreNet Global Summit** (real estate/site selectors; formerly IDRC), Salt Lake City, UT
- **May 28-30: Targeted business meetings and reception** Denver, CO
- **June 2-6: SuperComm** (communications), Atlanta, GA
- **July 17-24: SemiCon** (semiconductors; booth unconfirmed), San Jose, CA
- **July 22-25: Site-selector tour of ND**
- **July 30: Targeted business reception**, Minneapolis, MN. ■

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#### MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP OFFERS LEAN ENTERPRISE SESSIONS

In February, ED&F's Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) staff conducted Lean Enterprise general sessions in Jamestown and Fargo. More than 70 manufacturing staff representing 17 companies participated. Over the past year, other companies have taken part in Lean or Industrial Marketing training, and about a dozen of them have received additional in-depth training, assessment, or technical assistance.

This month, the MEP staff begins interviewing companies for whom they have provided technical assistance in the past, in an effort to determine the benefits and short- and long-term impacts. In April, the national MEP system will contract with an independent firm to do the same on the national level. ■

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#### "PARTNERS IN MARKETING" APPROVES \$46,000 IN GRANTS

Another \$46,000 in grants through the ED&F Partners In Marketing program was recently approved. The successful communities or regional partners include:

- \$30,000 to numerous groups in the Grand Forks region, including the Grand Forks Economic Development Council, Red River Regional Council, and local development corporations (LDCs) in Grand Forks, Nelson, Walsh and Pembina counties: to co-host the Red River Valley Golf Outing and Regional Showcase.
- \$5,000 to the East Central Technology Corridor, which includes the Griggs-Steele Empowerment Zone, Griggs/Cooper Development Corporation, and EDCs in Finley, Mayville-Portland, Hillsboro, Hatton, and Traill County: for marketing materials.
- \$11,000 to the Tioga EDC: to develop marketing materials and host a special community event targeting alumni and prospective business clients. ■

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#### HOEVEN ANNOUNCES \$860,000 INVESTMENT FROM NORTH DAKOTA DEVELOPMENT FUND

Gov. John Hoeven announced that the North Dakota Development Fund Board of Directors has approved \$860,000 for five different projects. The financing supports the growth or sustainability of projects in Grand Forks, Mandan, Dickinson, New Rockford and Parshall, ND.

As a program of ED&F, the North Dakota Development Fund (NDDF) provides gap financing to assist primary-sector businesses throughout North Dakota.

"Since its inception, the Fund has approved more than \$40 million, which has contributed to the creation of more than 6,500 jobs for North Dakotans," Hoeven said. "We have a powerful tool here for building our

(article continued on next page)



economy, and we're targeting investments in the most promising business sectors."

The projects receiving funding since Jan. 1, 2002, include:

- **Grand Forks Growth Fund, Grand Forks:** building renovations for Cirrus Design Corp. aircraft assembly plant (\$250,000 from NDDF; \$750,000 from the City of Grand Forks)
- **National Information Solutions Coop (NISC), Mandan:** 28,000-square-foot expansion to existing facility (\$100,000 from NDDF; \$1,400,000 from First Southwest Bank and Bank of North Dakota; \$200,000 from Lewis & Clark Regional Council; \$200,000 from the Vision Fund; and \$100,000 from the City of Mandan)
- **North American Bison Cooperative, New Rockford:** processing facility for bison and sale of bison products (\$85,000 from NDDF; \$85,000 from Security State Bank of ND; \$85,000 from the Bank of North Dakota)

- **Northwestern Dairy, LLP, Parshall:** dairy operation (\$275,000 from NDDF; \$506,668 from Lakeside State Bank and Peoples State Bank; \$253,333 from Bank of North Dakota; \$75,000 from DOC Community Services Division; \$1,050,000 from Mountrail/Williams counties, SBA 504, Reservations Telephone, North Dakota Water, Minot Magic Fund and Williston Star Fund) ■

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"The success of [Microsoft] Great Plains can be attributed to a variety of factors, most importantly its location in North Dakota. Businesses in the state have access to an outstanding university system, responsive support from local and state government, including Governor John Hoeven, and a large array of financial incentives through the state-owned bank, the Bank of North Dakota."

Don Morton, assistant to the president  
Microsoft Great Plains, Fargo

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