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this issue

- 130+ Guests Attend Event
- SBDCs Assist Nearly 1,000
- Trade Mission Gets Results
- Trade Office Hosts Exporter's Roundtables
- ND and CSC Partner

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commerce matters

AWM Staffing Announces Location in Hazen

AWM Staffing, a Colorado-based company owned by former North Dakotans, will locate in Hazen, N.D. The company provides medical staffing services to clients across the United States. AWM Staffing identifies vacancies in medical facilities and then skillfully matches quality medical professionals to fill those vacancies. "We are pleased to welcome AWM Staffing to Hazen and to North Dakota," said Lt. Gov. Jack Dalrymple at a news conference in Hazen to welcome the company. "By doing things differently, local and state economic development groups are working side-by-side with quality projects like AWM Staffing to further their growth and prosperity."

The Hazen location will be the focal point of AWM Staffing's sales, recruitment and financial operations. "This announcement means there will be up to 13 new, higher-paying jobs in another rural North Dakota community," said Lee Peterson, commissioner of the North Dakota Department of Commerce. "The AWM Staffing location marks the second Colorado company to choose North Dakota in the past 12 months, and that's due, in part, to our strategic marketing efforts in the Denver area." Partners on the project include Hazen Community Development, city of Hazen, Mercer County Economic Development, Union State Bank, Lewis & Clark Regional Council, the North Dakota Development Fund, and the divisions of Community Services and Economic Development & Finance at the North Dakota Department of Commerce. ●

Don't Miss the Summer Meeting of the Economic Development Association of North Dakota, June 13-15, in Dickinson. Call 701-225-5997 for details!

Marketing Delivers Results

North Dakota's economic development efforts took on a new direction in 2001 with the formation of the Department of Commerce, a comprehensive marketing plan and the strategic plan the North Dakota Economic Development Foundation prepared. From November 2001 to April 2004, the following results related to our marketing efforts have been achieved, in partnership with several groups (outlined below):

1. 10 out-of-state business events were held with 1,400 guests attending.
2. Five new companies have expanded their operations in North Dakota. (Either company executives attended one of these events or a guest who attended an event referred a company executive to the DOC to begin a relationship.)
3. Using an economic impact model, the projected, three-year gross state product from these five companies is \$4.4 million.
4. More than 20 local or regional economic development organizations have partnered with DOC to host and sponsor these business events.
5. Five campus presidents and the chancellor for the North Dakota University System have participated in these business events.
6. Two elected state officials and four members of Gov. John Hoeven's Cabinet have attended these out-of-state business events.
7. Over 750 individuals have signed up to be North Dakota Ambassadors.



Linda Butts

continued on next page

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13. Thirteen business executives representing eight different North Dakota communities have spoken on behalf of the state and publicly discussed with event guests how their companies grow and prosper in North Dakota.
14. Twenty-eight businesses have contributed financially to these out-of-state marketing efforts.
15. A total of \$149,685 in advertising impact has been generated through positive media stories that mention North Dakota's business recruitment efforts and the business event being held at the time of publication.

Our efforts to market North Dakota for business recruitment and expansion are still in their infancy. Nonetheless, with our partners, we believe we have laid a solid foundation that will continue to generate results and improve the quality of life for the people of North Dakota. ●

Denver Business Reception Welcomes 130+

Good things are happening in Denver, CO, for North Dakota. More than 130 business executives, alumni and North Dakota leaders attended a North Dakota Business Reception there May 12. Of those, 32 completed response cards, including six who indicated an interest in expanding their primary-sector business in North Dakota. In fact, a brief mention about the



Mark Draeb, CEO of Grizella Corp., Hebron, charmed the audience with the positive differences of moving his company from Colorado to North Dakota last year. Draeb spoke to more than 130+ guests at a North Dakota Business Reception in Denver, CO, on May 12.

reception in the business section of the *Denver Post* prompted more than 20 phone calls from people interested in what North Dakota has to offer. The Department of Commerce says “thanks” to the following local economic developers and North Dakota leaders who helped host or sponsor the event: Ken Will and Richard Mower, Bismarck-Mandan Development Association; Sue Morton and Eric Icard, Fargo-Cass County Economic Development Corp.; Laurie Tuite, Griggs-Steele Empowerment Zone; Gaylon Baker, Stark Development Corp.; and Tom Rolfstad, Williston Area Development Foundation. ●

SBDCs Assist Nearly 1,000 Clients

North Dakota's Small Business Development Centers assisted 975 clients during 2003. The SBDCs received \$166,000 in 2003 from the North Dakota Department of Commerce to work with the state's entrepreneurs in starting or expanding their businesses. The efforts at the eight SBDCs offices across the state contributed to 399 jobs either created or retained; 107 businesses started, expanded or retained; and additional investments in the state (through loans or equity) of \$13.7 million. The North Dakota SBDCs rank #16 among the 55 other centers in the U.S. for the percentage of jobs created or retained in comparison to the available workforce, even though it ranks #49 in terms of population served. ●

Fargo, Bismarck and Grand Forks Move Up Forbes List

The North Dakota Department of Commerce salutes Fargo, Bismarck and Grand Forks for their rankings in the *Forbes* magazine 2004 Best Small Places for Business. Fargo ranked #2 (up from #5 in 2003); Bismarck ranked #7 (up from #25 in 2003); and Grand Forks ranked #23 (up from #39) in 2003. The annual ranking is based on cost of doing business, job growth, educational attainment and population. For more information, visit <http://www.forbes.com/bestplaces/2004/05/05/04bestplacesland.html>. ●

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Summers Manufacturing Announces Expansion

Larry Summers, president of Summers Manufacturing Co., Inc., Devils Lake, recently announced the largest expansion in the company's nearly 40-year history. "Our company is breaking ground for a 38,000 square-foot addition at our Devils Lake facility, bringing our total square footage in Devils Lake alone to over 104,000 square feet." Summers Manufacturing manufactures and markets a complete line of agricultural field sprayers, a broad line of primary and secondary tillage implements which includes harrows, disks and chisel plows, and an all-purpose rockpicker. The cost of the building expansion and equipment will be in excess of \$1.5 million. In addition, the company plans to immediately add 13-20 employees to the existing workforce of 110 employees company wide. ●

APUC Commissioners Award \$192,750

The North Dakota Agricultural Products Utilization Commission (APUC), a program of the North Dakota Department of Commerce, approved \$192,750 to five projects at its quarterly meeting held May 13 in Bismarck. The projects include:

Sproule Farms, Grand Forks, was awarded \$52,500 for a feasibility study to investigate constructing a soybean plant in northeast North Dakota.

SunGold Foods, Fargo, was awarded \$57,750 to launch a national school food services marketing campaign for SunButter.

The **North Dakota Department of Agriculture - MAP Program** was awarded \$10,000 to help qualifying companies attend national and international trade shows and trade missions.

The **North Dakota Trade Office**, Fargo, was awarded \$52,500 to establish the agricultural component of the newly formed North Dakota Trade Office.

The **UND Department of Chemical Engineering**, Grand Forks, was awarded \$20,000 to further research aviation jet fuel from vegetable oils. Research will center on

overcoming limitations of cold flow requirements necessary for high-altitude aircraft fuels.

For more information, contact John Schneider at 701-328-5350 or jfschneider@state.nd.us. ●

ND Development Fund Approves Project

Composite America, Fargo, received approval for financing from the North Dakota Development Fund board of directors. The Development Fund is part of the North Dakota Department of Commerce Division of Economic Development & Finance. It provides flexible financing to businesses to help spur the state's economic growth. According to Dean Reese, chief executive officer of the Development Fund, Composite America will receive an additional \$126,000 in equity funding. Composite America was formed in 2001. The company specializes in compression molding using natural fiber composites. "It was a huge benefit to have a partner like the Development Fund to help our small North Dakota company get off the ground. The Department of Commerce was a tremendous ally and without them we wouldn't have gotten very far," said Scott Greelis, president of Composite America. For more information, contact Sheila Auch at 701-328-5310 or sauch@state.nd.us. ●

Research Develops Industry-specific Materials

The ED&F research team has completed four, industry-specific newsletters for business clients. The four-color newsletters target the food processing, advanced manufacturing, information technology and energy industries. Each contains detailed information on tax exemptions and incentives, companies within the respective industry sector already growing and prospering in North Dakota, and recent success stories. Maps outlining natural resources and infrastructure are also included. The newsletters are updated on a consistent basis to provide clients with the most current data available. For more information, contact Cory finneman at 701-328-5328 or cfinneman@state.nd.us. ●

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Taiwan/Japan Trade Mission Gets Results

Gov. John Hoeven announced the trade mission, led by Lt. Gov. Jack Dalrymple in March, is producing results. Eight of the 12 North Dakota businesses who participated have sent shipments or signed contracts with Taiwan and Japan. Unity Seed of Casselton is shipping 1,500 metric tons of non-GMO soybeans to Japan to be used for Natto, a Japanese delicacy. Superior Grains, Crosby, has shipped 20 containers of peas to Asia. Arrowtech of Rolla shipped two orders of radiation detectors to Taiwan and Cal-Dak Cabinets, Minot, shipped cabinetry for homes being constructed in Japan. Peterson Farms Seed, near Prosper, joined Unity Seed in shipping a container of soybeans to tofu manufacturers in Taiwan. "The containers being shipped, along with other contracts resulting from the trade mission, represent real opportunity for our export economy," said Hoeven. "North Dakota businesses are tapping into the enormous trade potential of growing markets in Asia and throughout the world, resulting in new wealth, higher-paying jobs and a more diversified economy for our state." ●

ND Trade Office to Host Export Roundtables

The Department of Commerce and the North Dakota Trade Office, working with local chambers of commerce and economic development organizations, will hold roundtable discussions with current and future exporters to solidify recommendations. Export Roundtables were held or are planned May 26 in Bismarck and Minot, May 27 in Williston, June 1 in Jamestown, June 2 in Wahpeton and Grand Forks, June 3 in Fargo and June 16 in Dickinson. All businesses shipping to foreign markets or wanting to ship to foreign markets are encouraged to attend. For details, contact Dina Butcher at 701-224-1541 or dina@exportnd.com. ●

North Dakota and CSC Form Partnership

North Dakota and Computer Sciences Corporation announced the formation of a partnership to develop solutions for national

border security. Nine partners – including the North Dakota Department of Commerce – signed a memo of understanding to work to achieve funding from the Department of Homeland Security that will create a smart-border community in North Dakota. This community will serve as a test bed for a cost-effective, field-operational platform that enhances border protection for the United States. "We believe this marks the first time a state has partnered with private-sector businesses, university campuses, congressional members, state agencies and a community to apply for funding to develop a high-tech, integrated border security system," Gov. John Hoeven said. "The potential reach for this project extends from showcasing our existing technology-based businesses to demonstrating the capabilities of our Centers for Excellence at UND and NDSU. We are seeking an estimated \$20-\$30 million." ●

North Dakota in the News

The North Dakota Department of Commerce continues to pitch positive stories about North Dakota to national media. The following are a list of our most recent results:

- *Advanced Manufacturing*, March/April, 2004, "North Dakota set for growth of RFID industry," advertising impact = \$17,125
- *Los Angeles Times*, April 12, 2004, "Firms Have a Long List of California Turnoffs," advertising impact = \$8,675
- *San Fernando Valley Business Journal*, March/April, 2004, "North Dakota set for growth of RFID industry," advertising impact = \$17,125 ●

Be Thinking About Governor's Choice Awards

The 2004 Governor's Choice for Economic Development Awards will be held again in conjunction with the fall meeting of the Economic Development Association of North Dakota. Be thinking about your nominees for Professional Developer of the Year, Volunteer Developer of the Year and Project of the Year. Nomination forms will be available in July. ●