

NEBRASKA DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Nebraska Department of Economic Development
P.O. Box 94666, Lincoln, NE 68509-4666

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June 2004

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Nebraska ranks “Second” in Third Annual Liability Ranking Study

The United States Chamber of Commerce Institute for Legal Reform’s annual State Liability Systems Ranking Study found a wide gap between the best and worst states in legal fairness—a difference that underscores the need for both federal and state-based legal reform.

Nebraska ranked second for the second consecutive year...great news considering that states with the best-rated legal systems most often enjoy an advantage over lower-ranked states when it comes to attracting investment.

“Businesses go where they are wanted and they bring jobs and economic growth to the states with the best legal systems,” said Thomas Donohue, U.S. Chamber president and CEO.

The Institute for Legal Reform/Harris Interactive survey of more than 1,400 senior attorneys, now in its third year, is the preeminent standard by which companies, policymakers and the media judge the legal fairness of states.

The complete study, print ads and additional information are available online at: <http://www.uschamber.com/press/releases/2004/march/04-23.htm>

Nebraska ranks eighth in livability rating

Nebraska has earned the number 8 slot in the 2004 rankings of the top 10 “most livable states,” according to the Morgan Quitno Press, a Kansas-based research and publication company.

The rankings are based on 44 factors, including crime, population, utility costs, bankruptcy and unemployment rates, access to libraries, sunny days... even hazardous waste sites.

The list is compiled from research that Morgan Quitno Press staff members compile for the annually updated edition of the “State Rankings” reference book.

The Most Livable State Award is unique, said Scott Morgan, president and press founder, because it includes a broad range of economic, educational, health-oriented public safety and environmental statistics.

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DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Fellow Nebraska Development Supporters:

Much has been written about the use of economic development incentives in Nebraska's economic development effort. Both sides are obviously very passionate about the issue. One underlying theme that is often overlooked during this debate is the relationship between tax incentives and the overall tax structure. In an effort to better understand these very complicated, yet interrelated issues, DED has been working with the Nebraska Diplomats, the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce to conduct a study of Nebraska's overall business climate, including tax and incentive impacts.



Richard Baier, Director

During the next several weeks and months, the organizations that funded this research, DED personnel and business leaders will be making presentations across the State to discuss the current implications and to receive input about what Nebraska can do to assure a solid and forward-thinking business climate. I would encourage you to be a part of this discussion.

KPMG Consulting was selected to produce the resulting product, "A Comparative Analysis of Nebraska's Business Climate". This important research evaluates the overall tax and incentive impact on seven selected case study businesses for Nebraska and nine competing states. The case study businesses that were evaluated included a start-up high tech company, a large distribution company, an information services back-office company, a value-add cheese processing plant, a corporate headquarters location, a family-owned rural manufacturer and a family-owned metro manufacturer. Other states that Nebraska was compared to in this research include: Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Wyoming.

While you may not be surprised by the results, Nebraska had the highest overall business tax burden in five of the seven business case studies, compared to competing states. The research then calculated the incentives that would have been available to the prospective businesses in each of the participating states. The resulting project specific tax burden, assuming incentives, showed a varied mix, with Nebraska still being the highest tax burden for the small family-owned manufacturer in a metro area, to 7th lowest overall tax burden for an information services back office company.

The KPMG research also evaluates the income and property tax impact on a range of business employees, including the entry-level employee (\$22,000 annual), manager (\$46,000 annual), top executive (\$83,000 annual), and CEO (\$200,000 annual). The results for this portion of the research show that Nebraska had the 8th highest personal tax rankings for the manager, top executive and CEO. The entry-level worker scored in the middle, with the 5th highest personal tax burden.

The information included within the KPMG Comparative Analysis is intended to provide us, and everyone interested in the future of Nebraska with a solid understanding of where Nebraska's business climate ranks in comparison to competing states. It also indicates areas where we can make improvements or enhancements to our State's business and economic base.

During the next several weeks and months, the organizations that funded this research, DED personnel, and business leaders will be making presentations across the State to discuss the current implications and to receive input about what Nebraska can do to assure a solid and forward-thinking business climate. I would encourage you to be a part of this discussion. We need your input and ideas.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard J. Baier".

Richard J. Baier

National MEP program named finalist for government ‘Oscar’ and eligible for \$100,000 prize Nebraska MEP is one of its shining stars

Fifteen trailblazing government initiatives at the federal, state and local levels have been named finalists for the esteemed innovations in American Government Award, a program of the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government. The award is administered in partnership with the Council for Excellence in Government. Each of the 15 finalists is now in the running for one of five \$100,000 prizes, known as “the Oscars” of government award programs.

One of the 15 finalists is the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP), administered by the U.S. Department of Commerce. MEP uses public and private funds and service fees to help small manufacturers compete effectively in the marketplace.

An example of the outstanding quality offered through the national MEP is the Nebraska MEP Center, which for the sixth straight quarter, scored a perfect 100 points on its review this past January. Those centers found to be in “good standing,” need to score a minimum 70 points. Nebraska MEP received special commendations for ranking 5th best in Bottomline Client Impact Ratio, 2nd best in Investment Leverage Ratio and 3rd best in Customer Satisfaction Score among all centers nationwide. On a scale of 1 to 5, Nebraska MEP clients rated the center’s services high, an average of 4.76 in the categories of satisfaction and whether they would use the services again.

Nearly 1,000 applicants vied for the 2004 Innovations in American Government Award. Each of the 15 finalists delivered a public presentation before the National Selection Committee at Harvard University in May. The committee will select five winners that will be announced on July 28 at the Excellence in Government 2004 Conference in Washington, D.C.

For information on the Innovations in American Government program and this year’s finalists, visit <http://www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu>, or <http://www.excelgov.org>

For information on the Nebraska MEP, contact Dave Wright toll free at 800-426-6505, 402-471-3755, or email: davew@neded.org

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Trenton Agri-Products, LLC grand opening

Congressman Tom Osborne, Governor Mike Johanns, Richard Baier, DED Director, and Robert M. Beren, chairman of Trenton Agri-Products, LLC were joined by local representatives at a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the grand opening of Trenton Agri-Products on May 24.

Trenton Agri-Products is an ethanol manufacturing facility in Trenton, Nebraska. Berexco, Inc. of Wichita, Kansas, an oil and gas production company, is the managing partner of Trenton Agri-Products. The plant will process nearly 11 million bushels of corn into 30 million gallons of ethanol and 96,000 tons of distillers dried grains with solubles annually. Hitchcock County was awarded \$608,000 Community Development Block Grant funding for the building of the plant facility. Open since March 29, the plant employs 31 people.

For information, contact Tara Hosick at 308-367-8844, or email: tarah@neded.org or Stew Jobs at 308-385-6355, or email: sjjobs@neded.org



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\$505,000 to assist Fremont with business start-up

Fremont has attracted a new Philadelphia-based sheet metal and assembly plant. Governor Mike Johanns made the announcement when he awarded \$505,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to the city to help start-up the company.

Fremont will loan Southwark Metal Manufacturing Company, Inc., \$500,000 to construct a new facility. The remaining \$5,000 will be available to the city for loan-related administrative costs. The company is expected to create 30 full-time jobs.

The project funding is part of a program directed by DED, which assists with the development of businesses and communities throughout the state. Federal funds are made available to Nebraska from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's CDBG program.

An additional \$3.63 million funding from Southwark Metal Manufacturing, the city of Fremont, Nebraska Investment Finance Authority, Nebraska job training funds and the city's local option sales tax fund (LB840) will go toward the purchase of equipment, employee training, and construction costs.

Founded in 1946 by Samuel Blank, Southwark Metal Manufacturing Company has manufactured prefabricated sheet metal ducts and fittings for more than 55 years. The company has a workforce of more than 800 employees located in manufacturing facilities in Philadelphia, Indianapolis, Ind., Piedmont, S.C., and Southaven, Miss., and has grown to be one of the largest duct manufacturers in the U.S. The new Fremont facility will better serve the company's existing customer base in Omaha and Kansas City.

For information, contact Dave Gilfillan at 402-223-6654, or email: dgilfillan@neded.org

Abengoa Bioenergy assumes control of Ravenna ethanol plant

St. Louis-based Abengoa Bioenergy Corporation has become the managing partner of a soon-to-be completed ethanol manufacturing facility in Ravenna. The plant is expected to employ more than 50 people.

Abengoa Bioenergy Corporation signed an agreement with Nordic Biofuels of Nebraska, LLC. that was affiliated with Vancouver, Wash.-based Baard Renewables, a firm that develops ethanol facilities throughout North America. As a result, the plant will now be named Abengoa Bioenergy of Ravenna, LLC. The project previously went by Nordic Biofuels of Ravenna, LLC. When fully operational, Abengoa Bioenergy of Ravenna will produce up to 88 million gallons of ethanol per year, making it the largest dry mill ethanol plant in Nebraska and one of the largest in the U.S.

With facilities in York and Ravenna, Abengoa Bioenergy now becomes the state's largest producer of ethanol with an annual capacity of more than 140 million gallons. Combined with the expansion of existing plants in Kansas and New Mexico, Abengoa Bioenergy will rank as the second largest ethanol producer in the U.S. with a capacity of more than 200 million gallons per year.

"The Ravenna plant fits into Abengoa Bioenergy's focus and commitment to research and development, and will serve as an extension of its research initiative based at the operating R&D pilot plant in York," said Javier Salgado, president and CEO of Abengoa Bioenergy.

"As a leader in ethanol production and with our commitment to research, I can envision a time in the not-so-distant future where Abengoa Bioenergy is training people throughout the industry, and the Ravenna plant would be a perfect place to do that," Salgado said.

For information, contact Mark Derowitsch of Bailey Lauerman at 402-479-0220.

"As a leader in ethanol production and with our commitment to research, I can envision a time in the not-so-distant future where Abengoa Bioenergy is training people throughout the industry, and the Ravenna plant would be a perfect place to do that."

Javier Salgado,
president and CEO of
Abengoa Bioenergy

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Economic Development Commission openings

The terms of Economic Development Commissioners Bill Harris, Tony Raimondo and Terry Moore will end in July. DED thanks these individuals for their years of service and dedication to helping promote and develop Nebraska's economy.

As a result of these vacancies, new commissioners will be named from each of Nebraska's three congressional districts. Residents of both rural and urban areas, whose professions reflect a diverse range of industries, such as production agriculture, manufacturing, transportation, communications, travel and tourism, and insurance may be considered as qualified candidates. However, no more than five commissioners may belong to the same political party, and each commissioner is limited to two consecutive terms.

Anyone who is interested in seeking a commission appointment must fill out an Executive Appointment Application. To obtain an application via the website, go to: <http://gov.nol.org/bc/app.html>. Provide as detailed information as possible so that the most qualified candidates may be recommended to the Governor.

If you would like to recommend an appointee to the Economic Development Commission, or know an individual who would like to be reappointed, contact Whitney Bunkers, administrative assistant, Nebraska Boards and Commissions, at 402-471-2244.

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Executive
Appointment
Application

[http://gov.nol.org/
bc/app.html](http://gov.nol.org/bc/app.html)

Demand for Micro Business Services continues to climb

Programs working with micro businesses across Nebraska have recently completed the 6th year of data collection for funding received under the Nebraska Microenterprise Development Act. This information, published by DED in cooperation with the Nebraska Microenterprise Partnership Fund (NMPF), reveals that increasing numbers of businesses are tapping services provided by micro programs and these services are helping make a difference for businesses.

"Individuals from 92 of Nebraska's 93 counties received services from July 2002 through July 2003 and the number of active loans and trainees increased to 4,068," said Richard Baier, DED director. "DED recognizes the importance of small business start-up and entrepreneurial efforts as part of the State's overall economic development strategy. Support through the Microenterprise Partnership Fund is one of the many ways in which the state of Nebraska is investing in small business success."

NMPF, as part of its agreement with the state, leverages the state funds with non-state funds and administers the program. The state of Nebraska supported this work in 2003 with \$250,000 in grant funds.

Programs made more than \$1 million in loans with an average loan size of \$9,800. "NMPF, in an attempt to project total loan demand, has developed a projection based on the top 10 counties per-capita results for new loans. That projection shows a total annual new loan demand of \$9.9 million. We must be careful with projections, because they are just that – projections, but programs often comment that the potential demand is much greater than the available resources," said Rose Jaspersen, NMPF director.

Twelve programs received funding under this program in 2003. Information on these programs can be found at <http://www.nebbiz.org>. Individuals also will find services provided in their county at that site.

For information on the Microenterprise Development Act, contact Rose Jaspersen at 402-846-5757.

*"Individuals from
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**Richard Baier,
DED director**

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Grand opening of Somers Point Apartments II

Fremont seniors have a new place to call home at Somers Point Apartments II, a new 32-unit development that offers affordable two-bedroom apartments. Senior residents and housing leaders in Fremont held a grand opening in April, led by U. S. Representative Doug Bereuter (R-NE), Fremont Mayor Donald Edwards, State Senator Ray Janssen (15th District), and representatives from Fremont Housing Authority; Excel Development; Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA); R. V.P. Properties, Inc.; the Midwest Housing Equity Group, Inc.(MHEG); and Fannie Mae.

Located at 1033 W. Somers Point Drive in Fremont, Somers Point Apartments II consists of 32 apartments in four 6-plexes and one 8-plex. The \$2.377 million development is reserved for people, 62 years and older, who earn no more than 60 percent of the area median income for Dodge County. Maximum income for one-person is \$22,380, with rent starting at \$400 per month, excluding electricity.

The apartments also offer support services, including coordinated transportation through the city or Nye Senior Services, food supplement packages through Low Income Ministries and the government commodity program, an exercise program, and Home Health Care Services through Nye Square. Each unit includes a washer/dryer, garbage disposal, dishwasher, range, refrigerator and full bath with a grab bar in the shower. Other amenities include attached garage with electric opener and barrier free entrances.

The Fremont Housing Authority retained the Excel Development Group of Grand Island and Lincoln to develop the property. Construction and permanent financing was provided by loans from the American National Bank. The Federal Home Loan Bank of Topeka awarded Affordable Housing Program funds to the project. DED, using state housing trust funds, structured a \$400,000 subordinate loan to the partners. Also, as part of an annual allocation process, NIFA awarded federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits to the project. Through NIFA's tax credit program, the nonprofit MHEG made a \$1.359 million equity investment on behalf of numerous corporate investors across Nebraska.

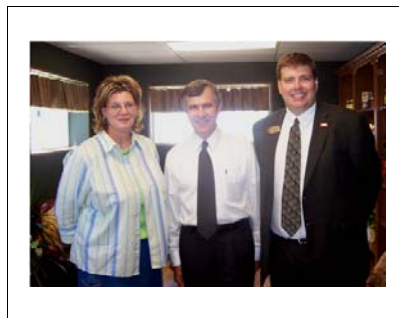
Excel Development Group has completed two of three development phases. Phase I, which opened in September 2000, consists of 32 one-and two-bedroom apartments. Phase II began construction in 2002 and was completed in October 2003. Somers Point I and II are 100 percent leased.

For information on renting at Somers Point Apartments II, contact Sue Kleider, Fremont Housing Authority, at 402-727-4848.

Ribbon-cutting and open house in Orleans

Governor Mike Johanns, Richard Baier, DED director, and other dignitaries were in Orleans in late May to help Traci and Sam Dietz celebrate the new location of their business, Mama's Salsa.

President and owner Traci Dietz started Mama's Salsa in the late 1980s. With help from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Food Processing Center, she went from selling a dozen jars at a craft show to landing an account with a local distributor. To keep up with the growing demand for the company's hot and mild salsa products, the home-based business recently expanded into a larger nearby facility.



L to r: Traci Dietz, president and owner, Mama's Salsa, Governor Mike Johanns and Richard Baier, DED director.

For information, contact Traci Dietz at 308-473-8008 or 308-991-5960.

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Deshler manufacturer to celebrate 50 years

Deshler-based Reinke Manufacturing Company, a manufacturer of mechanized irrigation systems and over the road trailer and chassis equipment, will celebrate its 50th year in business with activities planned around Deshler Daze, June 18-20 in Deshler, Nebraska. On Sunday, June 20, Reinke will be inviting the general public to join them for a free lunch and plant tours beginning at 11 a.m. and running until 3:30 p.m. at the Reinke headquarters located 1 mile west of Deshler on Highway 136.

Richard F. Reinke founded Reinke Manufacturing Company in 1954. A self-taught engineer and draftsman with an eighth-grade education, Reinke designed the world's first fully reversible, electric-gear driven center pivot system with rubber tires and a bowstring truss. He is considered the father of modern-day mechanized irrigation and many of his product innovations went on to become standards in today's industry.

From about 1954-1984, Reinke's company acquired 30 worldwide patents and accomplished many industry firsts, including the unveiling of a stainless steel mainline pivot.

In 1976, Reinke developed Reinke Shakes, an aluminum corrugated shingle that was marketed and sold in 49 states and many foreign countries. In 1985, the company branched out, adding products and manufacturing processes that complemented the irrigation business.

Today, the company employs nearly 400 people in a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility on 80 acres, and maintains 35 trailer dealerships and more than 160 irrigation dealerships throughout the U.S. and Canada, as well as 62 international irrigation dealers in over 30 countries.

For information, contact Arnold Ehlers, Thayer County Economic Development, at email: amehlers@hotmail.com

Nebraska featured in magazines

Endless Vacation magazine and *American Profile* Sunday supplement magazine are the latest publications to feature the great attractions and beautiful places found in Nebraska.

Travel writer Todd Pitock vacationed with his family in Omaha, taking in sites, including Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo, the Durham Western Heritage Museum, the Old Market and the Lee G. Simmons Conservation Park & Wildlife Safari, and the Strategic Air & Space Museum. His two and a-half page story is featured in the May/June issue of *Endless Vacation*.

A silhouette of Lewis & Clark grace the cover of *American Profile*'s April 11-17 issue. Inside, travel writer Curt Arens features Lynch, Neb. (pop. 276) in his Hometown Spotlight column headlined "Prairie Dog Town."

For information, contact Mary Ethel Emanuel toll free at 800-228-4307, 402-471-3797, or email: marye@VisitNebraska.org

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Three earn Economic Development Institute diplomas

Mark A. Werthmann, DED development consultant, Rawnda Pierce, executive director of Twin Cities Development Association, Inc., and Linda Black, executive director of the Phelps County Development Corporation, have graduated from the University of Oklahoma's Economic Development Institute (OU/EDI) following sessions held in Indianapolis, Ind., in April.

Since joining DED in 1997, Werthmann has worked with the department's micro-enterprise program, speculative building loan program, and Community Development Block Grant program. Before coming to DED, he worked for the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation in Fairbury. An Omaha native, Werthmann has a bachelor's degree in political science and master's degree in public administration from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. In 2002, he earned special certification in economic development finance from the National Development Council based in New York.

Pierce has served as association director since 2002 where she oversees a staff that provides economic development programs and services throughout Scottsbluff, Gering, Terrytown, Mitchell, Bayard, and Scotts Bluff County. Prior to this job, she served as finance director for the City of Scottsbluff from 1998-2002, management accountant for Scotts Bluff County from 1994-1998, and accountant with Deloitte and Touche and Fred A. Lockwood and Co. from 1990-1994.

Pierce has a CPA certificate and a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Wyoming. She also serves as a member of the Nebraska Economic Developers Association and the Panhandle Regional Network Group.

Black is the executive director for the Phelps County Development Corporation. Prior to this job, she served as the executive director of South Central Bethpage.

Black holds a bachelor's degree in secondary education, is a licensed social worker and has a certificate in interaction management. She also is a member of the Nebraska Economic Developers Association Education Committee, Mid-America Economic Development Council Board of Directors, South Central Economic Development District, YMCA of the Prairie Board of Directors, and the Phelps Memorial Health Center Foundation Committee.

OU/EDI is a three-session program, each a week long, that provides a broad spectrum of advanced education for economic development professionals in a variety of core and elective areas, including Business Retention and Expansion, Real Estate Development and Reuse, Economic Development Financing, Managing Economic Development Organizations, Strategic Planning, Marketing, and other elective topics. Students must complete 117 hours of instruction selected from more than 50 seminars, workshops and discussion groups.

For information, contact Mark Werthmann toll free at 800-426-6505, 402-471-3760, or email: markw@neded.org, Rawnda Pierce at 308-632-2833, or email: twincitiesdev@earthlink.net, or Linda Black at 308-995-4148, or email: lblack@holdrege.org

Westward Airways ceremonial first flight

The ceremonial first flight was held on May 27 for Westward Airways, a new, affordable, scheduled airline serving the state of Nebraska with trips between Scottsbluff, North Platte, Lincoln and Omaha, Monday through Friday. Westward Airways will fly a 9-passenger Pilatus PC-12, "uniting the state in style."



Initial findings on Nebraska business climate presented to Nebraska Diplomats



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Richard Baier, DED director, presented the initial findings of "A Comparative Analysis of Nebraska's Business Climate" at Nebraska Business and Industry Day, sponsored by the Nebraska Diplomats, a statewide group of business and community leaders.

The analysis, funded by the Nebraska Diplomats along with the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce and DED, and conducted by KPMG, provides a comparative benchmark of taxes and incentives for businesses and individuals in Nebraska and nine competing states.

The businesses compared were in the field of agriculture, manufacturing, distribution, start-up technology, information services and those with corporate headquarters in the state. The purpose of the analysis is to provide a clear and unbiased review of Nebraska's competitive position as it relates to individual and business taxes and business development incentives.

In his remarks to the Nebraska Diplomats, Nebraska Governor Mike Johanns said, "We have to ask ourselves how we grow our state so that our children have opportunities to stay in Nebraska. Our state's economy changes and we have a responsibility to continually examine our tax and incentive policy to ensure it encourages economic strength and growth."

Preliminary conclusions of the review suggest that taxes are a key component in final business location decisions and are critical to retaining and recruiting businesses. With incentives included in the analysis, Nebraska is more competitive for some types of businesses. However, even with incentives, Nebraska's tax climate is middle of the pack. Nebraska's taxes on individuals are relatively high and may make it more difficult to recruit managerial and technical employees into the state.

Baier told the Diplomats that the study is only the beginning and their input is critical. He stressed that the Nebraska Diplomats are key statewide ambassadors to this ongoing process. Baier said, "The good news is that this analysis provides us with a foundation on which to start the process of involving people and organizations from around Nebraska in planning for our state's future. Now is the time for our agricultural, education, business and industry communities to come together with all Nebraskans, including elected officials, to take the necessary steps."

Dan Park, Nebraska Diplomats president, challenged his fellow Diplomats by saying, "We are the front line sales representatives for this state. It is imperative that we take the opportunity to build on this study and, together with the citizens of Nebraska, move our state forward."

The recommended next steps include:

- Finalize and distribute the final survey results.
- Analyze the data for trends, challenges and opportunities.
- Survey businesses and individuals from inside and outside Nebraska to determine what will help them decide to grow and expand in Nebraska.
- Involve people and organizations statewide in the process, including educators, agriculture, business and industry, elected officials and citizens.
- Develop plans, programs and policies that will help Nebraska grow and prosper in the next decade.

For information, contact Richard Baier toll free at 800-426-6505, 402-471-3747, or email: rbaier@neded.org



Presenting the Diplomats President's Award for Business Excellence to Bruce R. Lauritzen (center), First National Bank of Omaha, were (l to r) Dan Park, Diplomats' president and Governor Mike Johanns.

"We have to ask ourselves how we grow our state so that our children have opportunities to stay in Nebraska. Our state's economy changes and we have a responsibility to continually examine our tax and incentive policy to ensure it encourages economic strength and growth."

Governor Mike Johanns

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DED staff update: new NCIP coordinator named



Kathy McKillip has been named coordinator of the Nebraska Community Improvement Program (NCIP). Before joining DED, McKillip served as director of school programs for the Girl Scouts Homestead Council for five years. She has worked extensively with volunteer groups, nonprofit organizations, and in program management, including as a member of the Community Development Task Force for the City of Lincoln Urban Development Department, which advised the Community Development Block Grant Program and housing task force. She also served as part of visioning sessions and steering committees that implemented downtown and neighborhood revitalization projects in Lincoln. Her volunteer and professional experiences include community and economic development initiatives in Lincoln and southeast Nebraska communities. McKillip also holds a Nebraska real estate license.

She has a bachelor's degree in women studies and history with a minor in global studies and business from Nebraska Wesleyan University. She is currently pursuing her masters in Great Plains studies.

McKillip has been heavily involved in historic preservation issues locally and statewide, and is currently restoring a historic home in Lincoln with her husband, Monte, and their children, Max and Emma.

For information, contact Kathy McKillip toll free at 800-426-6505, 402-471-6587, or email: kmckillip@neded.org

North Platte and Hastings business owners take steps toward "passing it on"

Business owners attending the first couple "Selling Your Business and Retiring: Benefiting Yourself and Your Community" workshops in North Platte and Hastings came away with impressive strategies for ensuring the continued success of their businesses after they retire.

Attending the workshop were manufacturers, owners of athletic clubs and an embroidery business, and a restaurateur, all at varying stages of planning for future retirement and business succession.

Several businesses were already for sale while other individuals had not given any thought to the steps involved in leaving their businesses.

"[Dave] Naby provided insight into the importance of structuring business deals so that owners/sellers and buyers protected themselves from the tax trap," said a North Platte business owner.

"I hadn't given any thought to the tax consequences to the purchaser."

"This workshop helped crystallize my thinking about selling my business and was very worth the trip," said a Hastings workshop participant. "I'll sell out as soon as possible."

The remaining workshops are scheduled:

June 4, 10 am MT—Scottsbluff, UNL Panhandle Research and Extension Center, 4502 Avenue I. Contact: Starr Lehl at 308-631-7780.

July 9, 10 am CST—Beatrice, Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites, 4005 N. 6th St., off Hwy. 77. Contact: Lisa Dominisse at 308-535-8018.

September 17, 10 am CST—Norfolk, Lifelong Learning Center, 601 E. Benjamin Ave. Contact: Lisa Dominisse at 308-535-8018.

October 22, 10 am CST—Valentine, Holiday Inn Express, 803 E. Hwy. 20. Contact: Lisa Dominisse at 308-535-8018.

"[Dave] Naby provided insight into the importance of structuring business deals so that owners/sellers and buyers protected themselves from the tax trap."

A North Platte business owner

Indian Commission and DED join to strengthen capacity of native nonprofit housing programs

The Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs (NCIA) has received \$40,000 Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund (NAHTF) money set aside from 2003 to either subcontract with another organization or work directly to build the capacity of Nebraska's four tribes—Omaha, Ponca, Winnebago and Santee Sioux—to provide more affordable housing for families. DED administers the program.

The NCIA will work with DED to ensure that the award is used to:

- identify staff and future staffing needs for managing nonprofit housing programs for Ho-Chunk Community Development Corporation, the ISANTI Resident Organization, the Native Council on Economic and Community Development, and the Northern Ponca Resident Organization;
- evaluate native members' housing needs and wants and compare these to what is approved in the Indian Housing Plan of each local Tribal Housing Program with the goal of establishing cooperation between the nonprofit organization and tribal entity;
- rate each nonprofit organization's capacity to manage projects based on the Nebraska Housing Developers Association Standards of Excellence;
- gauge the level of support and political stability for each of the four nonprofit organizations;
- identify programs and services to be offered to residents and the organizations or companies to provide them;
- help each tribe prepare applications for continued administration and operating funding to be submitted to DED;
- provide written program design change recommendations (if any), to the Nebraska Affordable Housing Program to best serve the housing needs of Nebraska's native population;
- provide written recommendations for serving the housing needs of Nebraska's native population living off the reservation.

"Native nonprofits struggle with covering the costs of staff and office operations and these are essential to maintaining ongoing efforts to produce affordable housing for the people that they serve," said Lara Huskey, DED housing coordinator.

"Consequently, it is difficult to sustain tribal housing programs according to the requirements of public investors, such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, DED, the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development, and really puts these nonprofits at a distinct disadvantage when they are trying to access many mainstream housing funding sources."

"Our hope is that capacity is strengthened and maintained so that these organizations can properly sustain existing programs and compete with other applicants for mainstream affordable housing resources in the future," Huskey said.

For information, contact Lara Huskey toll free at 800-426-6505, 402-471-3759, or email: lhuskey@neded.org

Nebraska Department of Economic Development

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Fall event in Denver to showcase Nebraska

If your community or company has jobs that need to be filled, or anticipate future employment needs, consider making a personal pitch to hundreds of people anticipated at the "Explore Your Possibilities" Nebraska Alumni Celebration, November 20, 3-8 pm, at Downtown Denver's Adam's Mark Hotel, 1550 Court Place.



Event planning is underway to showcase the amenities that Nebraska can offer its college and university alumni living throughout Colorado's Front Range who may be considering a move back to Nebraska. These include:

- Available jobs in a variety of industries
- Services and assistance tailored to business start-ups or expansions
- Safe, comfortable communities in which to raise families
- Available homes that meet all families' needs
- Outstanding educational opportunities for all ages
- Top-notch tourism attractions and recreational activities
- Less traffic and shorter commute times

Space is available for 100 booths featuring companies, cities, communities, educational institutions, realtors, tourism attractions and other key organizations from throughout Nebraska.

The event also will include dinner with Governor Johanns kicking it off, and featuring keynote speaker James Clifton, president and CEO of The Gallup Organization, and emcee Juli Burney, comedian, humorist, motivational speaker and communication consultant.

For a packet of information, contact Patty Wood or Kim Bastemeyer toll free at 800-426-6505, or email: pwood@neded.org or kbmeyer@neded.org



The mission of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development is to develop economic opportunities by keeping Nebraska businesses, communities and people competitive.

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