



SPECIAL EDITION

Where to, Wyoming?

Workforce Services takes stronger, responsive role in communities

P3



TIM CUSTER-WORKFORCE SERVICES

Jackson summit draws 350 workforce partners

More than 350 people representing Wyoming businesses, education, economic development, and state agencies spent June 3-4 in Jackson to solve business problems and

chart a course for Wyoming's workforce development. The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services and Wyoming Workforce Development Council hosted the summit.

Demand-driven summit delivers business solutions

By Barbara Rohrer and Jonathan Downing
Workforce Services

If you build it, they will come. That vision rekindled America's "Field of Dreams" in 1989 and it worked again last week in Wyoming, drawing a strong new consortium of workforce developers to a landmark Governor's Summit on Workforce Development. More than 350 people – business owners, educators, economic developers, workforce experts, and state and national media – made history June 3-4. They heard and took home Wyoming's first state-of-the-workforce report.

They gathered, in just two days, straight-up business solutions from about 65 national, regional, and state experts, all handpicked for their ability to help Wyoming grow.

They forged new partnerships and they remarked, over and over, how this conference was different.

"This has been exciting," said Jerry Ziemann, president of Pioneer Printing in Cheyenne. "The things I learned – ideas I can implement in my business. One of the things I can do right away is being able to improve productivity – how to have a better understanding of where my



AGING
Baby Boomers, Swing generation delay retirement

Employers tap work ethic, wisdom P10

RISK
Mountain climber urges businesses to embrace risk

Shrug off the leeches and forge ahead P5

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Jobs 'best antidote' for family problems

Training workers for higher wages builds the kind of society Wyo wants

By Kennedy Penn and Barbara Rohrer
Workforce Services

"The best antidote for a lot of family problems that we have in this state are jobs that allow people trying to command money to have time to be parents," Gov. Dave Freudenthal said June 3 at the first Governor's Summit on Workforce Development in Jackson.

Freudenthal's goals for Wyoming family jobs and wages tie closely to the goals of the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (DWS) and Wyoming Workforce Development Council (WWDC), cosponsors of the summit.

Freudenthal said he supports training workers so they can receive higher wages because it helps "build the kind of society we want in Wyoming."



BARBARA ROHRER-WORKFORCE SERVICES

Gov. Dave Freudenthal, left, answers questions posed by Wyoming reporters -- clockwise -- Katharine Decker of KJWY Channel 2 in Jackson, Will Roberts of the *Jackson Hole News and Guide*, Richard Anderson of *planet jackson hole*, Tim Monroe of the *Wyoming Business Report*, and Jessica Lowell of the *Wyoming Tribune-Eagle*. National media also attended the 2004 Governor's Summit on Workforce Development in Jackson June 3-4.

The governor also said he wants to see funds invested by DWS to continue to be linked to economic development efforts in the state and to help workers receive better pay for their time.

Freudenthal added that while there currently is a surplus in Wyoming's budget, funds allocated to DWS must meet the same litmus test as other state agencies.

"You gotta show us what we are getting

for the money. We need to know how it is that it either helps business and development of the economy or improve the ability of the individual to gain a larger reward for their participation in the workplace."

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Training grants program reopens July 1

By Deb McFerrin
Workforce Services

Wyoming businesses and training entities alike have been awaiting the July 1 re-opening of the Workforce Development Training Fund.

Nearly 100 people got a head start in understanding the training fund's revised format and policy for grants during a Workforce Development Training Fund (WDTF) workshop at the Governor's Summit on Workforce Development June 4 in Jackson.

The grant program is administered by the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, under the direction of Glenna Campagnaro and Dave Teubner. Teubner is the administrator of the DWS Business Training and Outreach Division; Campagnaro is the BTO assistant administrator.

The WDTF program was developed to help businesses provide training to employees to increase competitiveness and to encourage wage increases for workers. It also provides "a tool to recruit new businesses to Wyoming," said Campagnaro.

Teubner pointed out that the new program is a result of the efforts of an advisory workgroup consisting of representatives from government, business, training entities, community colleges, and the legislature.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING FUND

Reopens July 1, 2004

Online applications at www.wyomingworkforce.org

New timeframe for applications (45 days to 110 days)

40 percent matching contribution from employer for existing position training



The business training grants help existing businesses and also provide a tool to recruit new businesses to Wyoming.

Glenna Campagnaro

The fund is available to businesses, non-profits, and county hospitals for existing or new positions.

Businesses can receive funding up to \$2,000 for each employee in a fiscal year for existing positions; new or expanding

companies can receive up to \$4,000 to provide training for each employee depending on salary levels.

The new rules require a 40 percent matching contribution for existing positions, but to further encourage business development, no business match is required for new or expanding positions. There are also changes in the allowable costs and the application process.

When the WDTF program reopens on July 1, it will have new rules, an improved application process, and stronger program accountability. It also will allow for "self-selecting training that's right for them (the businesses)," Teubner added.

To ensure Wyoming businesses are fully equipped to understand the new rules, the improved application process, and the stronger program accountability, a four-hour "Train-the-Trainer" session was held in Jackson June 3.

Applications must be submitted at least 45 days before and no earlier than 110 days before the proposed training session is scheduled to begin. "This window is important to us because it will help us manage the program," said Campagnaro.

For more information on the Workforce Development Training Fund and to obtain the new applications and instructions, visit the DWS Web site at www.wyomingworkforce.org and click on "Businesses."

Investments work for Wyomingites

By Kennedy Penn
Workforce Services

What investments are shaping Wyoming's workforce?

Five key workforce partners answered that question during the 2004 Governor's Summit on Workforce Development June 4 in Jackson.

Wyoming's workforce and economic development efforts are benefiting from unprecedented coordination, said Tucker Fagan, chief executive officer of the Wyoming Business Council. In the past, Wyoming has not had a united effort, Fagan said, but the council is "forging an alliance with Workforce Services."

The Department of Workforce Services (DWS) brings two critical pieces to help Wyoming workers become successful, said DWS Director Kathy Emmons. "One is focus – the focus on the need for a trained workforce. What is that trained workforce? Who are the players? How do we bring everybody together? The other piece is the tools that we have within the department. We need to help get people the tools they need to be successful. It's not 'What can I make you do?' but 'What are the tools I can provide to help you be successful?'"

"We have training dollars available," Emmons continued. "Our customers are job seekers — those who are out there trying to get jobs — and business. The reality is until we can serve our businesses partners better, we can't serve our job seekers as well, so we are really retooling the whole department to be much more demand-driven. We need to make sure business is identifying what they need."

Wyoming's K-12 education system will continue to improve vocational programs to help students leave school

WORKFORCE INVESTMENTS

- Agency alliances
- Focus and tools
- Vocational training
- Demand-side development
- Accessible training

with the skills necessary to support a family, promised Dr. Trent Blankenship, Wyoming's superintendent of public instruction. Public education will work to reduce the number of students who don't complete high school, he added. Currently, one in five students don't graduate.

The University of Wyoming is developing the demand side of Wyoming's workforce, said Dr. Bill



"We need to help get people the tools they need to be successful. It's not 'What can I make you do?' but 'What are the tools I can provide to help you be successful?'"

Kathy Emmons



Wyoming's workforce and economic development efforts are benefitting from unprecedented coordination.

Tucker Fagan

Gern, vice president for research at the University of Wyoming. Through a partnership with the Wyoming Business Council, UW is developing a high-tech sector, supporting and growing existing businesses, and supporting entrepreneurial businesses.

Wyoming's seven community colleges continue to serve a high percentage of Wyoming's residents, said Dr. JoAnne McFarland, president of Central Wyoming College, providing Wyoming's workers with "accessible and affordable training."



BARBARA ROHRER-WORKFORCE SERVICES

Workforce Services Director Kathy Emmons, left, discusses Wyoming's workforce needs with U.S. Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training Emily Stover DeRocco during the 2004 Governor's Summit on Workforce Development in Jackson June 3. DeRocco manages a \$11.1 billion federal budget that funds the nation's public workforce investment system, including several Wyoming programs. Emmons and other Workforce Services administrators met with DeRocco to ask for more support in delivering services critical to Wyoming.

Demand drives DWS

July 1, 2004, marks the second full year of operation for the Department of Workforce Services (DWS). DWS was created out of a need for Wyoming to provide more coordinated services to job seekers while moving toward a heavier emphasis with the business communities across Wyoming.

"The mission of DWS and the scope of the Governor's Summit on Workforce Development are very closely tied" stated Director Kathy Emmons. "The Summit was to concentrate on bringing together the key players in building a strong workforce for Wyoming."

It was during a conference in Washington, D.C., that DWS department staff and Workforce Development Council members determined it was time to bring together all the workforce development entities, as well as the private sector, to begin identifying business solutions and potential strategies for Wyoming.

"The conference in D.C. focused on education, economic development, and workforce. We realized it was critical to bring not only these three groups together, but also business owners from across the state," said Emmons.

That shift in mindset is the heart of the mission of DWS.

"DWS will be playing a much stronger role in local communities. We will be more

involved in assisting business owners identify the tools available to meet their workforce needs" said DWS Deputy Director Jim Elias.

The department has many services available to assist existing businesses with their daily workforce issues, as well as businesses hoping to expand or relocate to Wyoming. "The local offices will be taking a much stronger approach in the local workplace. We'll be coming into local businesses to discuss with our customers the tools we have in regard to training, job pool identification, screening, and placement options," Elias said.

"There will be a much stronger outreach effort than in the past. For some of our local offices, this will be an extension of what they currently do. However, it will be a considerable paradigm shift for other offices," Elias added.

"We have two groups of customers — the job seeker looking for a new or better employment, whether they are in the blue- or white-collar field," said Emmons. "The second is the business community. DWS is dedicated to a new way of doing business across Wyoming."

"We're demand-driven. In order for us to more effectively serve our job seekers, we must strengthen our outreach and commitment to the business community in Wyoming."



"DWS will be playing a much stronger role in local communities."

Jim Elias

Managing health insurance

By Kennedy Penn
Workforce Services

A recent study found that 14.1 percent of Wyoming's population, or 70,000 people, are uninsured for medical care. Additionally, 17 of Wyoming's 23 counties are underserved in primary care areas.

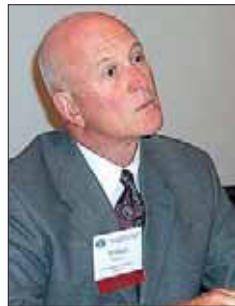
Not surprisingly, cost is the No. 1 barrier between Wyoming citizens and health-care insurance. Small business owners face many hurdles in providing health insurance for their employees, and that's why "Strategies for Reducing Health Insurance Costs for Small Businesses" was included in the 2004 Governor's Summit on Workforce Development in Jackson June 3-4.

Bill Lindsay, a principal with Benefit Management and Design Inc. in Denver, suggests the use of Health Reimbursement Arrangements (HRAs). This program allows employers and employees to contribute to a health care account tax-free. The funds are portable from one employer to another and can be rolled over the next year. There are two key requirements on these plans:

- It is only for those under 65.
- Spouses cannot have dual coverage.

Employers and employees should calculate the potential savings of the plan and whether such plans meet company and employees goals, Lindsay advised.

George Bryce, a licensed insurance consultant, presented the WYO-CARE Plan to tackle the problems in Wyoming's current healthcare situation. The WYO-CARE plan was created by the Affordable Health Care Coverage Subcommittee of the Wyoming Healthcare Commission. The biggest goal of the committee is to reduce the number of uninsured residents in Wyoming.



Bill Lindsay



Lloyd Wilder



George Bryce

The plan creates accounts for eligible employees. It is then used for health insurance and out-of-pocket expenses, with a choice of high-deductible, lower premium health insurance policies to cover major medical expenses. The employee pays non-covered, out-of-pocket expenses, and the employee is supported with information and technology to assist in better healthcare decisions, said Bryce. The

plan's main goal is to educate the consumer about the cost of health care and allow for increased flexibility. These types of consumer-directed plans have shown that costs are reduced for employers. Employees are happy with their coverage, Bryce said, with reenrollment rates at 98 percent.

"This session was informative, and the explanation of the difference between

FSA, HSA, and HRA was beneficial," said Allen Andrews, human resources director for the Hitching Post Inn in Cheyenne. "I'm glad to see a longer range plan being addressed, and we have steps we can do now to help this process. With small employers at such a disadvantage, it's good to see they are finding ways to help them provide affordable health coverage for their employees."

STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING HEALTH INSURANCE COSTS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Currently used by many employers, this is also known as the "Section 125 Plan," Flexible Benefit Plan," or "Cafeteria Plan."

This plan has three main components:

- Pretax premiums, flexible spending accounts, and dependent care.
- Enables employees to pay premiums on a pre-tax basis and thus avoid federal income tax (FICA).
- Enables employees to set aside (unlimited) funds in an account to pay non-reimbursed medical expenses on pre-tax basis.

This is an "employee-based" plan, with contributions coming solely from the employee. The greatest drawback to this plan is that it is on a "use it or lose it" basis. Any money contributed to this account that does not get used is not carried over to the next year. This contributes to inefficient use of these funds, and possible unnecessary medical expenditures, just to use up the money.

Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA)

This plan was the result of a Treasury Department ruling. It permits rollover of unused funds from year to year (no "use it or lose it"), and can be offered in conjunction with an FSA. However, only employer funds are contributed, so it lacks employee buy-in. Funds cannot revert to the employee upon termination, retirement, or death, it is subject to COBRA, and cannot work in small businesses, mainly due to employer-only contributions.

Health Spending Account (HSA)

This is a new concept in health savings programs, derived from the original Medical Savings Account program, which was a temporary pilot plan to see how this concept may work. It is based on having higher deductibles and a health savings account from which to draw to cover expenses before having to apply them to

the health insurance plan.

- Permits employee and/or employer tax-free contributions to a fund.
- Any size employer and any tax structure is allowed.
- Funds are not taxed when withdrawn for qualified reasons (Section 213(d)).
- Funds can accumulate at interest.
- Unused portions roll over from year to year, so there's no "use it or lose it."
- Funds are portable.
- Annual contributions capped at lesser of actual deductible or \$2,600 for individuals and \$5,150 for families, which is expanded if age is over 55.

Requirements of this program include:

- It must be a "qualified health plan."
- Minimum \$1,000 deductible for single (max \$5,000).
- Minimum \$2,000 deductible for family (max \$10,000).
- No co-pays.
- "Family deductible" is a new concept.
- Only for those under age 65.
- Can't also have an FSA or HRA.
- Can't have spouse with dual coverage unless both are "qualified" high deductible plans.
- Qualified expenses exclude health insurance premium payments (except COBRA).
- Funds withdrawn for non-medical purposes will be taxed, plus 10 percent penalty.
- Funds on deposit must be held in a custodial account.

This program provides enough flexibility to customize it to fit employer needs, from small business to larger corporations. Employers can determine how long their employer contributions will last while the funds build or when they will start, or provide for a certain percentage of employer contribution and a certain percentage of employee contribution.

-- By Irene Larson, Workforce Services

Assessing worker safety, risk

By Pamela Downing
Workforce Services

"For every \$1 in direct costs, there's \$4 to \$17 in indirect costs," attributed to Workers Compensation in Wyoming, said Mike Todd.

Todd, a risk-management consultant for the Wyoming Workers' Safety and Compensation Division, discussed Workers' Safety and Compensation with Wyoming's business professionals during the Governor's Summit on Workforce Development June 3 in Jackson.

Todd and Cindy Pomeroy, director of the Wyoming Department of Employment, presented "Managing Risk and Reducing Your Workers Compensation Costs."

There are many classes of risk for Wyoming's Workers' Safety and Compensation program, including economic, physical, social, legal, political, and juridical.

The Wyoming Workers' Safety Technical Assistance Division is available to perform a risk-management analysis for organizations across Wyoming. According to Todd, risk management is a company-specific presentation designed to assist employers in managing their Workers' Compensation Account.

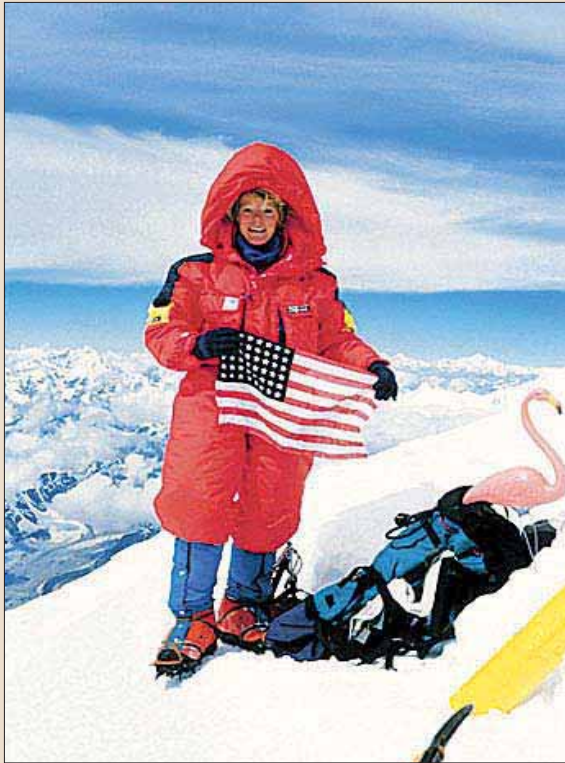
Costs associated with risk management that will become part of the risk-management analysis include the risk-management core team, outside services, retained losses, indirect costs, and insurance premiums.

A "Safety Discount Program" is available to Wyoming employers that have or are willing to adopt a written health and safety program, with specific requirements, Todd said.

Upon acceptance in the program, the employer has a potential to save up to 10 percent of the base premium.

For more information, Wyoming Workers' Safety Technical Assistance Division at (307) 777-7786.

To apply to participate in the "Safety Discount Program" contact Mike Todd at (307) 777-5961 or Aaron Lucht at (307) 777-3452.



LEFT: Stacy Allison summited Mount Everest in 1988. TOP: Allison and a teammate rest in a cramped snow cave. ABOVE: Allison signs copies of her books for Glenn Campagnaro of Workforce Services and Frederico Juarbe Jr., assistant secretary of labor, U.S. Veterans Employment and Training Service. Everest photos courtesy of Stacy Allison.

Summit to Summit

Mountain climber's tale of leadership & teamwork plays well in Wyoming

By Shelli Stewart
Workforce Services

"Running a successful company is a lot like climbing a mountain," said Stacy Allison.

Allison, the first American woman to stand on top of Mount Everest, spun a tale of risk and reward for a spellbound audience at the Governor's Summit on Workforce Development June 4 in Jackson.

The petite climber from Oregon, who reached the summit on her second attempt at the 29,035-foot Himalayan peak in Tibet-Nepal, sees strong similarities between mountain climbing and economic development.

"It's all about goal-setting," she said. "We have to be constantly looking up, assessing and re-assessing where we are."

Her amazing accomplishment followed a devastating defeat in 1987. The first time she attempted to stand on top of the world, the worst storm to hit

Everest in 40 years stopped her team.

"It was our summit day, and we looked up and saw the black clouds swarming in," Allison recalled. "There is so much pressure to succeed on the first try. We couldn't fathom admitting defeat and turning around."

But they made the right decision. Many businesses face this same dilemma, she pointed out. There are times when businesses must admit defeat and try again. The businesses that keep trying ultimately succeed.

Allison described her second Everest adventure as photographs of her climb loomed on a big screen in the Snow King Pavillion.

People do not reach the top of Mount Everest on their own, she told the audience. "We don't achieve success by ourselves. We have to work together to achieve anything of importance," Allison said.

Running a business brings tough situations similar to mountain climbing, Allison said. That's why paying attention to the small things propels people toward their goals. She described this lesson by discussing how her team placed ladders across crevasses so that the team could

progress though a massive ice flow.

"It's the little things that have a profound affect on the decisions we make," she said. Allison described how she and her team chose to start the ascent in an avalanche-ridden area of the ice flow. A few days into the ascent, an avalanche took out most of their leg work.

"Thankfully," she said, "my team was still alive." The small detail of where to place the starting ladder almost killed the climbers.

Barriers are common to both climbers and business owners, too. People always create barriers for themselves, like not having faith in their own abilities. "If you don't believe that you can make Wyoming a better

place to live, you might as well go home," she said.

On the way to base camp at Everest, Allison took a short cut and ran into blood-sucking leeches. "As we would brush by a bush, these leeches would glom on to our forearms and legs. Before we knew it, we were covered in leeches that left us covered in blood," she said.

Leeches come in many forms. "They could be the people who say after an idea

is presented, 'We tried that 10 years ago and it didn't work then,'" she described. "The biggest leech of all, however, is self-doubt."

After moving past the leeches and focusing on the small steps of her ascent, Allison began to describe her feelings as her goal etched closer and closer. "Once you get closer to your goal," she said, "it gets easier."

On the day she was to sit at the top of the world, she and her team were within 1,000 feet of their goal. At that point, the team realized they had only one extra canister of oxygen. They picked numbers to determine who would get that extra canister and reach the top.

"My teammate chose the number six, and I chose the number four," she said. "The number turned out to be three, and I got the canister."

Her teammates had the choice to make the climb without oxygen and risk their lives or turn around.

"Two of my teammates felt the risk was not worth it. However, one of them did, and he and I began to finish our climb," she said.

Allison shared the pristine feeling that flooded through her as she and her teammate sat on top of Mount Everest Sept. 29, 1988. "The top is the most vulnerable place to be," she said. "The top is good for looking out at new opportunities."



Mount Everest in Tibet-Nepal.

DWS DELIVERS from page 1

employees are. I've learned about training and resources and how to be more clear about what my expectations are."

"It's amazing, the way government is involved in industry, and the extent," said Summit exhibitor Suresh Pabba. Pabba directs data-base management for Marlabs, a national, Inc. 500 information technology company that expanded to Cheyenne last year.

"It's a little difficult to believe that it's a government entity that's going all out," agreed Mohan Chitoor, Marlab's technology manager in the West. "It looks like a genuine effort. It felt different. It wasn't just all words."

"You are so fortunate," said Ellen O'Brien Saunders, a Washington state workforce director who spoke at the summit. "You can access all opinion leaders. You have resources to invest in your future."

"Wyoming's outlook is very exciting," said Emily Stover DeRocco, assistant secretary for the U.S. Department of Employment and Training. While noting Wyoming's unique \$1 billion budget surplus, she urged the state to "continue to aggressively pursue employment in less cyclical industries" and to keep up its support for reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act, which funds major workforce development in Wyoming.

Both Stover DeRocco and Gov. Dave Freudenthal praised Wyoming's workforce partnerships. "There is remarkable community in this state, in this workforce agency, and in the council that try to make these programs work," Freudenthal said. "And I think this conference is part of it."

Partnerships bring needed strength and power to Wyoming, said summit organizers.

"The summit was our first large-scale response to Wyoming's business needs," explained Charlie Ware, chairman of the Wyoming Workforce Development Council. The council, created after the passage of the Workforce Investment Act in 1998, partners with the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services and the Wyoming Business Council to breathe life into the state's economy by focusing on its workforce.

Workforce Services is the state's newest agency, officially in the business of helping Wyoming's businesses and job seekers since July 2002.

The summit was the culmination of many months of planning by Workforce Services staff and council volunteers who are committed to creating solutions for the challenges of working and doing business in Wyoming, said Jeff Heilbrun, general manager of Teton Pines in Jackson. He's also chairman of the council subcommittee that planned the sum-



BARBARA ROHRER-WORKFORCE SERVICES



Clockwise, from top: Peter Reis of the Wyoming Business Council was the first onsite registrant for the Summit. Members of the Wyoming Workforce Development Council (WWDC), Department of Workforce Services, and Wyoming Business Council (WBC) gathered for a joint dinner meeting at Teton Pines. Workforce Services Director Kathy Emmons, left, enjoys a Jackson evening with WBC Chief Executive Officer Tucker Fagan and WSLC President Phil Van Horn. Gov. Dave Freudenthal reviews the state's first state of the workforce report. White House Internet News Director Jimmy Orr chats with Jessica Lowell of the *Wyoming Tribune-Eagle*.

mit.

Planning began about 14 months ago, when surveys were sent to several thousand Wyoming businesses to learn their critical workforce and business needs. Armed with responses from about 125 businesses, the subcommittee built an agenda to meet those needs, Heilbrun said.

The results gave summit participants their choice of nearly 20 business-solu-

tions workshops and panels, and updates on state and national initiatives on workforce development.

"We created opportunities for businesses to receive training on reducing the rising cost of health insurance for their business, recruiting and training skilled workers, reducing employee turnover, and improving employee performance, to name a few," said Ray Fleming Dinneen, vice chair of the council.



"Wyoming's outlook is very exciting."

Emily Stover DeRocco



The business training grants help existing businesses and also

provide a tool to recruit new businesses to Wyoming.

Tucker Fagan



"One of the things I can do right away is being able to improve productivity."

Jerry Ziemann



"It's amazing, the way government is involved in industry."

Suresh Pabba



"It looks like a genuine effort. It felt different. It wasn't just all words."

Mohan Chitoor



"The Summit was our first large-scale response to Wyoming's business needs."

Charlie Ware



Teton Pines Tableau

Teton Pines in Jackson was the setting for a joint meeting of the Wyoming Business Council, Wyoming Workforce Development Council, and the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services on June 2.

Business doors open for women

Support programs help Wyo women generate income

By Deb McFerrin
Workforce Services

Nationally, women represent 46 percent of the workforce. However, American women earn only 74 percent of what men earn.

This national snapshot of women in the workplace came from Dr. Mary Gatta of the Center for Women and Work at Rutgers University. Gatta and Amy Lea of the Wyoming Women's Business Center presented "Business Opportunities for Wyoming Women" during the 2004 Governor's Summit on Workforce Development in Jackson.

Barriers to traditional training to improve the wage disparity include child-care needs, irregular work schedules, lack of transportation and little access to employer-sponsored training, Gatta said. As one attendee, Brenda Ilg of ACS State & Local Solutions, said, "It's always surprising when we see how far we still need to go."

To address these barriers, New Jersey began a pilot program to give eligible working mothers computer skills needed in the workplace, Gatta said. The 128 women in the program were provided computers, printers, software, and online access to training programs. The participants were given technical assistance and met once a month to discuss their progress



Dr. Mary Gatta, left, of the Center for Women and Work at Rutgers University discusses opportunities for women in business with Rita Inoway of the American Association for Retired Persons.



Ashley Gummere



Chris Corlis



Brenda Ilg

or problems. Those who successfully completed the training program were allowed to keep the equipment.

Most of the women who completed the training remained with their original employers, and some employers did offer

advancement on completion of the course, Gatta reported. Studies will be done after two and five years to determine the long-term effects of the program.

In Wyoming, the good news is that 51 percent of privately-held business in the state are owned by women, Lea said.

The bad news is that the wage gap in the state is greater than the national average, with women earning 67 cents for each dollar earned by men. The Wyoming

Women's Business Center is taking a slightly different approach to address the wage-disparity problem.

Building on the spirit of entrepreneurship in the state, the center has developed a program to provide support to grow home-based craft businesses for low-income mothers.

As Lea said, "maybe you can find an activity you are passionate about" to provide additional family income.

The center offers business planning support and group training classes, access to a microloan program, networking opportunities, and Individual Development Accounts (IDA). The IDAs are matched-savings accounts for low-income participants which help provide capital for the growing business.

In September 2004, 50 participants will graduate from the training program, and the center is developing an on-line market which will be available for all Wyoming artists and crafters.

Several of the workshop attendees were unaware of these programs and will use the information to help women in their own programs.

Chris Corlis of the Wyoming Contractors Association said it was "very interesting with the amount of funding available and results received on the different programs."

He said the information will help him work with low-income mothers and families on different training projects in his organization.

Ashley Gummere of Rock Springs said the information also will be useful in developing her own new business.

Encouraging entrepreneurs

By Kennedy Penn
Workforce Services

In the United States, small businesses with 100 or less workers are responsible for 75 percent of job growth. These workers typically have higher wages, diversify the economy, and are involved their communities.

Ted Ladd, a member of the Wyoming Business Council Board of Directors, and Diane Wolverton of the Wyoming Small Business Development Center, gave a snapshot of entrepreneurial efforts in Wyoming during two workshops at the Governor's Summit on Workforce Development June 3-4 in Jackson.

A new service concept, the Entrepreneur Café initiative, will collocate several programs that assist Wyoming's entrepreneurs, said Wolverton. Programs are funded through a variety of different

sources, including the Wyoming Business Council, the Small Business Administration, the Economic Development Administration, and the Wyoming Women's Business Center. Through the initiative, six locations throughout the state — Rock Springs, Cheyenne, Powell, Gillette, Riverton, and Casper — will have staff trained in all of the programs that can aid potential entrepreneurs.

"You can't call the wrong office," said Wolverton.

Business strategies are an important part of creating a business, but according to Ladd, "too few businesses" create a strategy. Entrepreneurs should plan what segment of the population they are trying to reach. They should have a plan regarding the best way to reach that segment of the population, and what results they expect from the contact with that group.

Entrepreneur Café will help entrepreneurs create a business strategy.

Local incentive programs have boosted entrepreneurial interest, too, such as a business-plan competition at Jackson Hole High School. The \$500 prize was very motivating, Ladd said.

Jackson and other areas have hosted a "Biz Challenge" for local residents, offering a cash prize and in-kind gifts to help them start businesses. This type of program can help economic developers promote entrepreneurship in their community, Ladd said.

Dave Scriven, owner of Western States Mining Consultants, found the session very informative. He was particularly interested in a Wyoming Business Council program that helps entrepreneurs afford attending trade shows. "The program will help me do something I have never done before," he said.



Learn more about Wyoming's wage disparities in "Workforce 2004," available online at www.wyoming-workforce.org or by calling the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services at (307) 777-8650.

Turnover is not about \$\$

By Joe Perkins and Terry Higginbotham
Workforce Services

Turnover can rob a company of intellectual capital.

So how can Wyoming businesses protect their brain trust? By realizing the impact of turnover on the organization, the workgroup, and leaders. Turnover is “not about the money,” said Jane Whitmore of Development Dimensions International.

Whitmore’s workshop, “Reducing Turnover and Improving Retention,” emphasized that employers must realize the interests and expectations that their employees have. These interests and expectations will play a role in a worker’s desire to stay at a position.

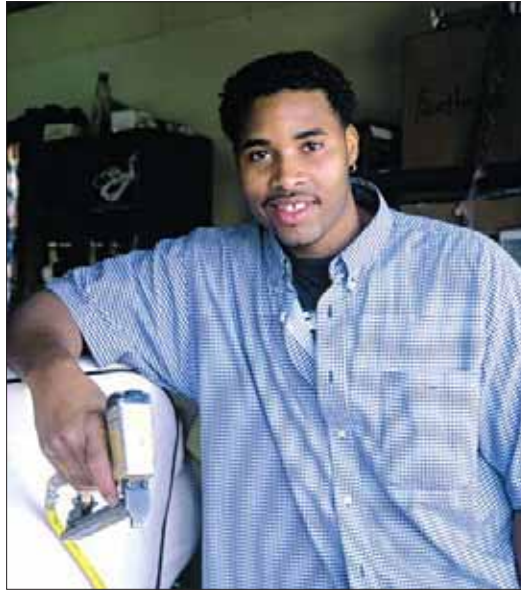
Work-life balance is frequently a concern of employees. An employer can address this interest by offering flextime or on-site child care, Whitmore said. As employers learn the interests of the employees, they will be more likely to address them, creating a happier worker.

It’s also important for employers to maintain and enhance self-esteem among employees, listen and respond with empathy, build trust, and build ownership. Through these steps, Whitmore said, an employee’s job will become more oriented with his values and goals. This will increase the likelihood of retention. According to

See **TURNOVER**, page 11

Accessing apprenticeships

By Shelli Stewart
Workforce Services



“One of the problems facing us today is our shortage of skilled workers,” according to Karen Swindells of the U.S. Department of Labor.

Swindells is Wyoming’s regional representative for the Registered Apprenticeship Program. Her workshop, “How to Access Apprenticeship and Training Programs for Small Business,” showed Wyoming businesses how to access time-honored training.

“Apprenticeships have been around for hundreds of years,” she said. “They began when children would sit at the knee of their fathers, watching them do their trade.”

Apprenticeship is a combination of on-the-job training and related technical instruction, Swindells said. It is a partnership of the federal government, the employer, and the apprentice. “These programs take someone with little or no skills and make him a professional in his field,” she noted.

Apprenticeship programs offer Wyoming’s employers well-trained workers, agreed Diana Enzi, a member of the Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship. “It’s on-the-job training in its purest form,” Enzi said.

Apprenticeships can last anywhere from one to eight years depending on the occupation. The apprenticeship programs always encompass industry standards. Currently there are over 850 occupations, nationwide, that have apprenticeship programs.

Apprentices must be at least 18 years old, have a high school diploma or GED, and be physically capable of doing the job in which their program resides. All apprenticeship programs are strictly voluntary and typically involve 2,000 hours of on-the-job training (which equates to one year full time) and 144 hours of technical instruction, which can include college classes. For more information, visit http://www.doleta.gov/atels_bat/.



Apprenticeship programs offer Wyoming’s employers well-trained workers. “It’s on-the-job training in its purest form.”

Diana Enzi

Wyoming community colleges provide training

By Shelli Stewart
Workforce Services

Since the Wyoming Student Loan Corporation began partnering with Laramie County Community College in Cheyenne for training needs, the organization has witnessed a decrease of 11 percent in employee training-related expenses, says Val Rodekahr.

Rodekahr spoke about her corporation’s experiences in using the community college system during a June 3 workshop, “Develop Your Workforce with the Community College System.”

The workshop was part of a series of business solutions offered during the 2004 Governor’s Summit on Workforce Development in Jackson June 3-4.

“Our mission is to invest in learning,” Rodekahr said.

The community college mission has broadened in Wyoming to meet business needs, according to Dr. Richard Gilliland, executive director of the Wyoming Community College Commission.

“(The community) colleges started out

DEVELOP YOUR WORKFORCE WITH THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

Colleges are refocused on workforce training

Training can be packaged to fit employer schedules, needs, and locations



“Workforce is key to a stable and growing economy. The community colleges are your key to improving your bottom line.”

Peter Reis

as transitional programs that moved students to the university. In the past seven to 10 years, colleges are re-focusing on workforce training,” Gilliland said.

Laramie County Community College (LCCC) has developed a training center to assist employers in training their staff. Similar programs are established at other community colleges around the state. Loree Hart of the LCCC Training Center said, “We make it (training) happen on your schedule, when, where, and how you want it.”

LCCC’s Training Center helps to facil-

itate trainings on team building, goal setting, partnerships, and a vast array of other topics for local employers.

“We can help you determine and meet your needs,” Hart said to the crowd of small business owners.

“Wyoming’s community college system should be the primary resource we use for workforce training,” Miles LaRowe, president of Northwest College, said.

Panelist Peter Reis of the Wyoming Business Council said the No. 1 reason for people leaving their jobs is a poor relationship with their bosses.

“Workforce is key to a stable and growing economy,” Reis said in support of the training programs offered by the community college system. “The community colleges are your key to improving your bottom line.”

“When we have to go out-of-state to get our training needs, it’s not good from Wyoming,” Rodekahr said.

For further information about community college training programs, contact each college individually by calling the Wyoming Community College Commission at (307) 777-7763.

Explore finance with two resources

By Kennedy Penn
Workforce Services

What's the small-business financing picture in Wyoming?

Diverse, according to two experts. Ben Avery, portfolio/loan manager for the Wyoming Business Council, and Pete Lawton from Jackson State Bank and Trust discussed the role that loans and banks play in helping a business acquire capital.

Their workshop at the Governor's Summit on Workforce Development in Jackson June 3-4 focused on two key resources available to Wyoming businesses:

- The Wyoming Business Council offers a Financial Resource Guide on its Web site, www.wyomingbusiness.org. This guide helps small business learn about the programs available in Wyoming.
- The State of Wyoming offers a variety of loan programs and can offer assistance to businesses in applying for Small Business Administration loans.

There are other considerations in applying for loans. Banks want information that pertains to business plans and cash flow. Business plans should be short, but show the company's viability along with an economic analysis of how the business will function.

Banks are also interested in historical data and projections for the future. It is necessary that businesses share all information with the lender when applying for a loan. By learning all the relevant information about a business, the bank is able to minimize its risk.

Baby Boomers reshape Wyoming's workforce

The Wyoming workforce and the workforce in the industrialized countries of the world are headed for difficult times. With the retiring of the "Baby Boom" generation, businesses are going to discover there are a shrinking number of employees to fill vacated jobs. Businesses must develop strategies to persuade baby boomers to continue working after retirement.

Wyoming is aging.

The picture drawn of Wyoming's population shifts startled people attending a workshop called "Swing and Baby Boomer Generations: Wyoming's Untapped Resource." The workshop drew about 35 participants at the Governor's Summit on Workforce Development in Jackson June 3.

In 1946, "GI's stopped making war and started making babies," said Byron "Buck" McVeigh, administrator of the Economic Analysis Division of the Wyoming Department of Administration and Information. The well-known result was the Baby Boom generation, sometimes referred to as the "Golden Agers." Baby Boomers were born between 1946 and 1964.

In 1970, the median age of Wyoming residents was 26.5 and in 2000 the median age was 36, reported Dr. Wenlin Liu of the Economic Analysis Division. One glaring statistic is that in 2010, the median age will be close to 40. Liu also pointed out that some Wyoming counties have an older population because of their scenery and/or the cost of living. Liu's closing remark was that "Grandma and Grandpa working" nowadays is a common phenomenon.

Peggy Auker, regional director for Experience Works Inc. (formerly Green Thumb) and Edna Vajda, the Department of Workforce Services' Older Worker program manager and a certified gerontologist, presented information about how to attract and retain mature workers in Wyoming.

Three factors — increased longevity, declining fertility rates, and a disproportionate size of the "Baby Boom" generation — will shift the workforce in industrialized countries and in Wyoming, Vajda said. Today's "mature workers" are more educated, more productive, and more literate than any generation to date. "As mass retirement looms in the next

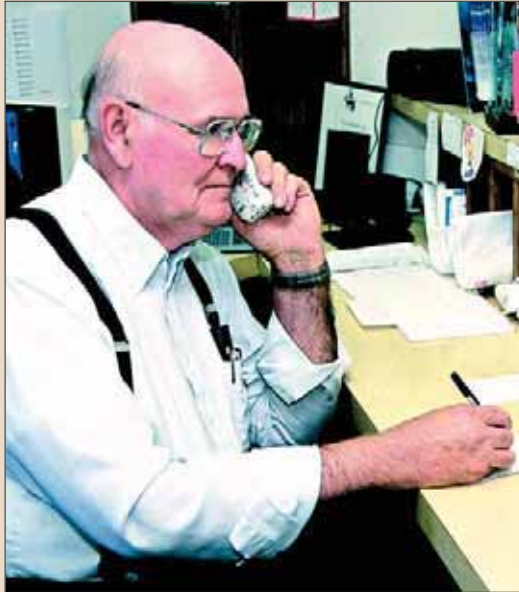
three years, it will be quite devastating to many businesses and viewed as yet another "brain drain" occurring in Wyoming," Vajda explained. "Generation X follows the Baby Boomers with 22 million fewer members and this will affect the labor market, as well."

Mass retirement could starve many businesses of key talent, Auker pointed out. She encouraged employers to re-think their workforce culture and make employment more attractive to older workers. Worker turnover costs an estimated minimum of \$10,000 to replace just one person, she said. Keeping the senior employees on the job can save the company or organization a great deal of

money. She suggested that in order to keep older workers, employers should be allowed to reduce their working hours to part time, work from their homes, work on special or short-term projects, job-share a position, and mentor younger employees.

Vajda recommended that employers look at their hiring practices. Employers must "transcend the age bias that influences hiring decisions," she said. Employers are encouraged to make their workplace "mature friendly," and recognizing and leveraging the knowledge and connections provided by older workers. In recruitment efforts, use of words such as "experienced," "knowledgeable," and "expertise" are attractive to Baby Boomers. Conversely, they can be put off by

See BOOMERS, page 12



Veterans need simplified job access

By Kennedy Penn and Barbara Rohrer
Workforce Services

Will Wyoming soldiers returning from active duty in Iraq find jobs that match their training and experience?

Not always — and that's why Frederico Juarbe Jr. is asking Wyoming and other states to simplify credentialing and apprenticeship steps to allow more veterans — such as mechanics and medics — to continue their careers as civilians without

repetitive training and delays.

Juarbe is the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans Employment and Training, and has directed the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) since 1982. A former Army medical corpsman with extensive experience with the National Veterans Service, Juarbe's passion for the people he serves became clear during the 2004 Governor's Summit on Workforce Development June 4 in Jackson.

In a speech punctuated with Shakespeare and sentiment, Juarbe pointed out that \$17 billion is spent every year to train U.S. service members, who hone their skills in demanding work environments. This advantage is recognized by Home Depot, Juarbe said, which hired 10,000 veterans in 2003 and will hire about 12,000 more veterans in 2004. Why? Because veterans are loyal, safety-conscious, well trained, drug-free, and have strong work ethics, he said.

America has a 60-year-old tradition of aiding veterans, established in 1944 with the "G.I. Bill," Juarbe reminded the audience.

One-to-one veterans' assistance remains a hallmark in Wyoming, with representatives like Dave McNulty of Casper. But transitional help must go beyond housing and education benefits, Juarbe said.

"It's not just about getting jobs, it's about launching careers."

TURNOVER, from page 9

This workshop was a good refresher and gave me strong new insight.

Jerry DeFrance

Whitmore, retention efforts should be centered on those people who are valuable workers and likely to leave. A worker's decision to leave a position or organization is frequently about issues other than money.

The workshop was a good refresher, said Jerry DeFrance of Jackson State Bank and Trust. Whitmore's observation that people leave managers, not organizations or companies, was a strong new insight, he said.

DeFrance and another workshop participant, Darrel Skinner of LSR Inc., both liked Whitmore's handbook, calling it "very useful" with an easy-to-use format with checklists.

Skinner also learned that it's critical for employers to interface with workers periodically, through evaluations to determine progression.



BARBARA ROHRER-WORKFORCE SERVICES

Snow King Lodge's Risty Peck carves roast beef for guests at the 2004 Governor's Summit on Workforce Development during a business networking night. Thirty-two businesses, educators, and other partners in economic development set up booths in the Snow King Pavillion. With 350 summit participants enjoying fine cuisine and interaction, exhibit participant Suresh Pabba from Marlabs in Cheyenne said the \$100 booth investment was repaid with "sharing and encouragement."

Interns add value to business operations

By Pamela Downing
Workforce Services

How can Wyoming keep its university graduates in state?

"In order to keep the students in Wyoming, business must show them the possibilities through the internship program," says Lanny Stevens, who directs the University of Wyoming's (UW) College of Business intern program. "We have an obligation to take the human resource, stuff them full of (information) and sell them as an output (through an internship program)."

Internships give students "an opportunity to gain experiential knowledge and ask the question 'Is this what I really want to do?'" he added.

Stevens, who is an assistant lecturer in management and marketing for UW, outlined the basics of "Creating a Quality Intern Program for your Business" at the 2004 Governor's Summit on Workforce Development in Jackson June 3-4.

Stevens pointed out that internships help add value to businesses:

- No long-term commitments
- Inexpensive recruiting tool
- Pools of qualified candidates
- Youthful, enthusiastic, and visionary employees
- Seasonal and special project staffing resource

UW has intern partners in various banks, accounting firms, insurance agencies, and landscaping and construction companies around the state. Opportunities are also available through Wal-Mart and Disney Corporation.

To qualify for the UW program, students must submit a formal application to participate in the program, a personal resume, and an academic transcript. They also must have advanced business standing or be a graduate student, and have a grade-point average of 2.5 or higher.

Employers who wish to participate in UW's internship programs may contact either the UW Center for Advising and Career Services at (307) 766-2389 or the UW College of Business Internship Program at (307) 766-2363.

'Fast fix' improves staff productivity

By Pamela Downing
Workforce Services

Most problems with employee productivity can be placed into three categories:

- Lack of motivation (WILL),
- Lack of skill knowledge (SKILL)
- Environmental obstacles (HILL)

Understanding will, skill, and hills can help organizations turn their workforce into a competitive advantage, said Kim Bernier, a senior performance consultant with the Center for Effective Performance.

Bernier addressed a crowd of Wyoming business professionals during her workshop, "Business Performance: How to Improve Employee Productivity," at the Governor's Summit on Workforce Development June 3-4 in Jackson.

To address problems with employee productivity, Bernier advised employee performance analysis — asking specific questions about whose performance is at issue, what should be happening, and what is actually happening.

Performance analysis should be a systematic approach that identifies the difference between actual and desired performance, identifies all potential causes, and identifies potential solutions, she

explained.

Many times when productivity problems occur, a "fast fix" is available to the organization and the employee.

"Fast fixes" include:

- Providing clear expectations to the employee
- Supplying the employee with needed resources
- Providing feedback

Feedback should include positive observations, occur within a reasonable time frame of the actual performance, provide explanations for the feedback, and clear expectations for future performance, Bernier said.

Correct performance analysis should clarify the problem, identify causes before the solution, and try fast fixes.

Bernier said these three steps should help a business or organization see improved performance and productivity, reduced training expense, reduced frustration of employees, increased employee retention, and increased profitability.

For more information on improving employee productivity, or to contact the Center for Effective Performance for training materials, visit www.cepworldwide.com.

White House Web whiz, Wyoming internet pioneer share best practices

By Kennedy Penn
Workforce Services

Three clicks.

That's all that should stand between a Web site visitor and the information they need, advises internet pioneer Aliza Sherman.

Sherman, a Wyoming internet consultant, and Jimmy Orr, White House internet news director, presented "Internet Marketing: New Markets for Small Business" at the 2004 Governor's Summit on Workforce Development June 3-4 in Jackson.

Businesses should use their Web sites to create and cultivate new clients, said Sherman, who runs the site www.medi-aegg.com.

"All important information should never be more than three clicks away," Sherman said. Information should be easy to find so the online activities can complement the business offline.

As simple as it sounds, businesses should know the goals of the Web site to create a quality site.

Site measurement is another necessity. "You need to know if your site is effective," said Sherman.

Not following the statistics of a site can mean that everything else is a waste of time. If important information is on a page that is never seen, the Web site owner can make changes that will make it easier to find.

Orr applied the characteristics that Sherman introduced to a real-life example with the White House website, www.whitehouse.gov.

Traffic to the White House Web site



White House Internet News Director Jimmy Orr and Barney Bush strike a pose in Washington, D.C. Orr and Aliza Sherman shared Web site strategies June 3-4.

INTERNET MARKETING: NEW MARKETS FOR SMALL BUSINESS

WEB SITE 'TOP 5' TIPS

1. Treat site users with respect.
2. Use a privacy policy.
3. Clearly describe products and services.
4. Enable users to find information within three clicks.
5. Follow site statistics to measure and improve usefulness.

has increased dramatically, Orr said, in part due to exclusive features.

"Exclusives" are a necessary part of a successful Web site, increasing traffic to the Web site because it is the only place to

find the content. Some innovations that Orr brought to the White House Web site, which now has about 40,000 pages, included the Barney Cam films, "Ask the White House" chats, and quizzes on the turkey to be pardoned at Thanksgiving.

The Barney Cam films, while entertaining, also help drive people to the site that will look at the president's message on Medicare after watching the movie.

"The site's biggest day was when we unveiled 'Barney Cam 2: Barney Reloaded,'" said Orr.

The Web site exclusives that Orr has implemented have increased traffic on the White House Web site and consequently have been able to communicate the president's messages — a main goal of the site.

BABY BOOMERS, from page 10

words such as "experienced," "knowledgeable," and "expertise" are attractive to Baby Boomers. Conversely, they can be put off by the words "energetic," "fresh thinking," and "fast-paced," which may imply the business is seeking young applicants.

Auker asked that employers look closely at their customer base to determine if their staff accurately reflects the age of their customers. Home Depot, for example, of a business that has hired thousands of older workers nationwide in the last few years.

Since Baby Boomers control more than 70 percent of the wealth in the United States, it certainly benefits businesses to "show a mature face to this clientele," Auker said.

Businesses also need to understand the value of lifelong learning for Baby Boomers and older workers and to adopt training policies that include this generation, Auker said.

Too often, training opportunities as well as promotion opportunities are overwhelmingly directed at younger employees with little thought to the skills and experience the over-55 crowd can bring to bear on almost any business problem.

To attract Baby Boomers back into the workforce after they retire, employers may have to compress or reduce workweeks, offer long-term care insurance, and other elder-care benefits.

Barbara Summers and Edna Vajda, both of Workforce Services, contributed to this report.

Peggy Auker and Vajda's presentation can be found on the DWS Web site at <http://www.wyomingworkforce.org>

The Equality State Almanac prepared and published by the Economic Analysis Division is available to the public by calling 307-777-7504.

For a more thorough review of Dr. Liu's information, visit <http://leadiv.state.wy.us>.

Industrial site selection: Art or science?

By Irene Larson
Workforce Services

Ever wondered how manufacturing companies choose their locations?

Elimination.

Site selection encompasses five steps, according to Robert Ady, a site selector for Ady International Co. Ady shared insights with Wyoming businesses during a June 3 workshop, "How to Attract Light Manufacturing to Wyoming."

Site selectors realize no location is "utopia," Ady said. Rather, selectors ask what detractors do sites possess that eliminate them from consideration? The competition is fierce, Ady said, so the objective for each community should be to capitalize on their strengths enough to shadow the weaknesses, reducing the significance of those weaknesses.

Most site selectors utilize a similar process, Ady explained, which includes the following steps:

1. Formulate objectives of the company's expansion or relocation

At this point, the company is developing strategies and defining facility and site needs, identifying specific requirements as well as subjective factors.

The implications for Wyoming include being proactive to ensure communities have sites ready for consideration.

2. Define search area

The company identifies communities for consideration based on a preliminary search they conduct in-house, including data gathering from relevant state and national Web sites.

They are looking to define state characteristics, then do preliminary evaluations of metropolitan areas and/or "stand-alone cities". They often do basic labor and transportation cost analysis.

The implication for Wyoming is the need to do a better job of nationally disseminating the advantages of the state's tax structure. Ady advised that knowledge of this

is not well known on a national level, so is often overlooked by many site selectors and companies.

3. Evaluate communities

During this step, Wyoming communities are compared to communities in other states. It is at this step that the site selector makes first contact directly with the state.

The community research becomes more detailed. Web sites are very critical at this point. Sites should be easy to navigate, information should be easy to find, and be complete and current. Specific, more detailed data can be provided upon field visits, but the general information provided on Web sites should clearly identify advantages for economic development selection.

Data collection in this step includes: demographic data analysis; available sites and/or buildings; projected preliminary operating costs; review labor costs, quality and availability; and quality of life issues, including education system, spouse employment, and community support.