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Recent Happenings

Young Professionals of the Columbia Basin held Holiday Food Drive and donated 93 pounds to the Moses Lake Food Bank

Attended International Economic Development Council's Export Webinar

Met with Big Bend Community College and Port of Moses Lake to discuss the needs of a new grant for a UVA program at the college

Attended Associate Development Organization Best Practice Meeting in Olympia with other EDC's across the state

Gave presentation to Columbia Skill Center for Global Entrepreneur Week

Attended two day International Economic Development Council's Business Retention and Expansion course

EDC attends Carbon Fiber Conference



One hundred and eighty people representing over 95 companies attended Composite World's Carbon Fiber 2014 conference in San Diego, CA.

Presentations during the two day conference covered a variety of topics including forecasts for the industry, challenges in production, supply and demand updates, the future of recycling composite materials and more.

"It was a lot to digest in just a short time," said Jonathan Smith, Executive Director for the Grant County EDC. "There were over 20 presentations so it was a pretty comprehensive overview of the state of the Carbon Fiber industry and what the future looks like."

Andreas Wüllner, Managing Director for SGL Automotive Carbon Fibers was one of the presenters. He gave an overview of the five year process the company has gone

through to create a completely new composites production supply chain. One of the key pieces of that supply chain is the SGL Automotive Carbon Fibers plant in Grant County where the feedstock for the textile composites is carbonized.

SGL's Grant County facility is the largest carbon fiber manufacturing facility in the world with an output capacity of 9,000 metric tons. One estimate of future growth was that in the next five years there will be demand for an additional 40,000 metric tons of carbon fiber.

"This is a rapidly growing industry," Smith explained. "There has been double digit growth in production for about ten years now. The fastest growth for the next five years is going to come from industrial applications and aerospace. We are positioned well to see some of that growth happen here in Grant County."

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EDC Reaches out to Local Businesses



Amway Nutrilite Facility in Quincy



Vantage Data Center Facility in Quincy

The mission of the Grant County EDC is: *To work for the continued orderly growth of the Grant County economy while improving quality of life.* Part of that work is to reach out to Grant County businesses. To that end the EDC reaches out to 45 local businesses annually. The purpose is to learn about the business, the industry, competitors, workforce needs, and future growth or expansion plans.

This year the EDC reached out to businesses in various industries including; manufacturing, agricultural services, food processing, aerospace, financial services, health care, retail, transportation and IT. "Even though we have a great diversity of industries located here, there are common challenges that they all share," explained Allan Peterson, Business Development Manager for the EDC. "When we start to notice common issues we try to dig a little deeper into those areas to see if there are possible solutions that we can help establish."

Of all the companies the EDC met with over the past year, only one has closed its operations. Most of the companies visited indicated that they are expanding both domestically and out of the country. Many local businesses are also hiring for new positions. When making hiring decisions, companies are looking for people that have the right attitude and aptitude.

"Most companies are willing to do training for job specific skills if the candidate has the right attitude and soft skills," said Peterson. "Where they are looking for outside assistance in training is for leadership skills, especially programs that focus on helping employees in first level supervisor positions be successful."

Meeting with businesses helps shape the strategies and services provided by the EDC to ensure that the needs of local companies are met.





2014 Wage and Benefit Survey

The EDC has released an updated wage and benefit report. Twenty-one companies participated in the report and represent a total of 2,166 employees. Of the twenty-one participating companies, 15 of them indicated that they have, or will be, increasing employment within the next year.

“The local economy is continuing to grow and this report helps quantify that,” said Allan Peterson, Business Development Manager for the Grant County EDC. “New businesses that bring new jobs to the area get a lot of media attention but this report shows that for this past year and the coming year our existing businesses are adding more than 300 jobs.”

In addition to information about job growth, the report also contains a summary of how employers rate the local workforce. For the companies that participated in the report:

- 67% rated the trainability of the

workforce as “Good” or “Excellent”

- 72% rated employee attitude as “Good” or “Excellent”
- 85% rated employee productivity as “Good” or “Excellent”

Companies were also asked about the quality of life in the community, the business climate, and their perception of the schools:

- 72% rated the quality of life as “Good” or “Excellent”
- 76 % rated the area business climate as “Good” or “Excellent”
- 85% rated community colleges as “Good”

Companies gave the lowest ratings to area transportation, employee job readiness, and the availability of skilled labor:

- 68% rated area transportation as “Fair” or “Poor”

- 70 % rated employee job readiness as “Fair” or “Poor”
- 81% rated the availability of skilled labor as “Fair” or “Poor”

The report also details wage and benefits for over 125 job positions for hourly and salaried workers. “This is easily the most requested report that we make available,” said Peterson. “Local companies utilize this data to gauge the marketplace, and help them make decisions about compensation and benefits.”

Information from the companies that participated in the report is held in confidence. The Pathfinders consulting group out of Dallas, Texas, was the only organization that saw any of the raw data and they used it to compile the finished report. To read the complete report go to <http://www.grantedc.com/about/news/economic-reports>.

NW Food Processors Association Workshop in Quincy

The Northwest Food Processors Association (NWFPA), in partnership with the Washington State Department of Agriculture held a Food Manufacturing Technologies & Sustainability Workshop early this month at Cave B Winery in Quincy. The Port of Quincy, Columbia Colstor and the Grant County EDC sponsored the event which was attended by food processors from across the region.

The workshop included discussions about employee training gaps and the current needs and challenges facing the industry. Additional sessions focused on sustainability practices and resources available to food processors. They included water efficiency, natural gas efficiency, and NWFPA’s Sustainability Guide & Energy Roadmap, which serve as

an energy management guide for food processors.

Gary Ash with National Frozen Foods and Marvin Price with ConAgra Lamb Weston BSW attended the workshop. Gary Ash is serving as president of the board of directors for the Grant County EDC and Marvin Price was president in 2013.

“It is important for the EDC to be present and involved in these kinds of events,” said Ash. “Based on what was learned at the workshop, the EDC is already investigating ways it can assist local companies with challenges related to talent attraction and recruitment.”

Another challenge discussed was waste water permitting and the amount of Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) in the water.

Earlier this year David McGirven, Interim President for NWFPA, participated on a panel at a Grant County EDC luncheon that addressed this topic. Follow up work from that luncheon has been ongoing and on January 28, NWFPA is hosting a Technology Showcase highlighting methods for removing TDS from wastewater.

“It has been great to work so closely with the Northwest Food Processors Association,” said Jonathan Smith, Executive Director for the Grant County EDC. “They have a team of experts that we are able to help connect with the large food processing cluster here in the County so we can proactively work to solve the challenges our companies face.”





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Consolidated Disposal Service, Inc.
Dano Law Firm, PS
Express Employment Professionals

Gary Mann Real Estate
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Guild Mortgage Company
Horizon Credit Union
Housing Authority of Grant County
Inland Cellular
Inland Tarp & Liner, LLC
ITC Services, Inc.
J & M Electric
JR Newhouse Co., PLLP
Key Bank
Lad Irrigation Co., Inc.
Lamb Weston, BSW
Landau Associates, Inc.
LC Farms, Inc.
Lenroc Company
Live Nation-Gorge Amphitheatre
Mardon Resort
Martin Morris Agency
Million Air Moses Lake
Moses Lake Chamber of Commerce
Moses Lake Community Health Center

Moses Lake School District
National Frozen Foods
North Central Washington Fence
Northland Communications
Penhallurick's True Value
Pillar Rock Grill/Moses Lake Golf Club
Polhamus Heating & Air Conditioning
Port of Coulee City
Port of Hartline
Port of Royal Slope
Port of Seattle
Port of Warden
Quincy Farm Chemicals, Inc.
Quincy Foods
Rock Steel Structures
SGL Automotive Carbon Fibers
Skaug Brothers, Inc.
Skone & Conners
Tommer Constructions Co., Inc.
Tommer Equipment Co., Inc.
Total Employment & Management (TEAM)

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Bronze Division Continued
Work Source Moses Lake Affiliate
Zip Truck Lines, Inc.

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