



Coming Attractions

News from the Cass County Economic Development Corporation

PO Box 142, 218 Washburn Ave. E, Backus, MN 56435
www.co.cass.mn.us/edc 218.947.7522

April 2011

Board Members

- Jim Tertin
- Dave Holk
- Jay Cline
- Terry Freeman
- Bill Palmer
- Cy Struss
- Bob Bruckbauer
- Lanny Searcy
- Marie Rose
- Bob Gogleye

Ex-Officios

- Bob Kangas
- Jeff Peterson
- Bob Yochum

Turning Originals into Digitals Smart Image Solutions

Sheila Jenniges of Motley contacted Cass County Economic Development Corporation in October 2010. She was requesting start-up assistance and financing options for Smart Image Solutions, a scanning, printing, and archiving business. The \$7,500 project costs were for scanners and printers. Sheila is able to preserve, print, and share pictures and documents.

"I appreciate all of the time and energy put into getting my business off the ground. I was encouraged to set goals. They would not let me give up!" Sheila Jenniges

Survey Results

Recently we conducted an online survey of our members on the importance of post-secondary educated employees.

107 responses were received from throughout Cass County and beyond. Responses by ZIP Code:

| | |
|----|-------|
| 18 | 56452 |
| 11 | 56435 |
| 3 | 56633 |
| 14 | 56655 |
| 6 | 56672 |
| 3 | 56473 |
| 28 | 56484 |
| 14 | 56474 |
| 10 | Other |

- 53.3% prefer post-secondary degree
- 50% would offer a flex work schedule
- 58% prefer evening classes
- 41% online classes
- 37% classes at a Cass County site
- 78% rate computer skills as a high priority

The results of this survey will be used to explore possible college options in Cass County.

Thank you
for
your participation!

"It was great to have someone to bounce ideas off because you want to make sure you are going down the right path during the planning process!" Sheri Kolkind, Insideout Mfg, LLC

Decorative Lawn Ornaments INSIDEOUT MANUFACTURING, LLC

Sherri Kolkind contacted our office in October 2009. She and her husband, Mark, wanted help in establishing a cost point for production of wholesale decorative lawn ornaments. After two years of business counseling and a \$40,000 investment, they are selling their products through shows and displays in stores. They anticipate hiring two employees.

Dan and Darcy Tonga contacted our office in December 2010, for help writing a business plan for their boat launching service on Leech Lake. They needed to renew their lease with the Army Corps of Engineers for longer than one year and were hesitant to make improvements to the business until a lease was secured. As a result of business counseling provided by the EDC, they were successful in getting a 20-year lease for their operation! Eight jobs were retained due to this lease extension.

Lease Extended

Tonga's Launch Service



"Efficient and thorough. It would have taken me two weeks to do what they did in two hours!" Tonga's Launch Service

Note from the Executive Director

Linking Education and Employment

Do you remember your last graduation? I was 37 years old when I earned a BS from Bemidji State. Over the years, I have learned that education is dependent on finances, motivation and opportunity. Increased opportunity for higher education is essential to our organization's goal of improving unemployment. In 2010, we coordinated a workgroup with Central Lakes College and Pine River Backus Schools to explore the possibility of CLC offering courses in Pine River. To date:

- We have obtained grant funds for a community technology lab and a coordinator
- We compiled an education survey, and
- We coordinated focus groups planned for March 25, 2010, to participate at 9 AM, 10:30 AM or 1 PM sessions, please call 218-587-4720.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Minnesotans who had completed some college or earned an associate degree had an average unemployment rate of 6.6% during 2009. This is compared with 8.9% for



high school graduates who never attended college. With college degrees, the 2009 average unemployment rate was 3%.

Developing the conditions for higher education and employment, like in this partnership with CLC and PRB, will bring long-term benefit to residents and we are very excited about this possibility.

We are a membership driven organization. Our members are passionate about growing Cass County. We are looking for enthusiastic and committed people to join us.

Together we can make a difference!



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Become a fan of the Cass County Economic Development Corporation. Keep abreast of current happenings; write on our wall and share your ideas!
Click the icon to visit our page*



Welcome New Members!

- Fritz Templin
- Hiawatha Beach Resort
- Otter Tail Power
- Howard Prushek

Member Since 2005

"I joined Cass County Economic Development Corporation in 2005 to support the development of private sector jobs in our area. As more businesses expand and hire workers, there are more potential year-round clients for my business as well as other local businesses. It will take time, but we are establishing more jobs in the private market...one job at a time!" **Dan Meier, Jr., Cass Company Insurance Agency, Hackensack.**

Questions or comments?
Contact us!

Gail Levenson, Executive Director
gail.levenson@co.cass.mn.us
218.947.7522
Sue Wickland, Office Coordinator
cass.edc@co.cass.mn.us
218.947.7523

A Community Non—Profit Corporation

"To improve the business environment of Cass County by encouraging a strong, diverse and sustainable economy and to build better relationships between business, government agencies and local communities."