

Forward

SIoux FALLS

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Futurist discusses workforce development at Sioux Falls seminar

Ed Barlow, president of Creating the Future, Inc., addressed a session sponsored by Forward Sioux Falls and the SD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, “*Workforce Development is a Journey, Not a Destination*,” taking a look at developing the workforce of the 21st century. The seminar, held at the Holiday Inn City Centre on September 30, was attended by a large crowd of regional business leaders.

Barlow analyzed the rapidly-changing world in which we are all living, noting the technological advances that both challenge us and make life easier. According to Barlow, human knowledge is expected to double every year by 2012—and technical information will double every 72 hours by 2010. That means that keeping pace with change will be difficult—but necessary to business success.

South Dakota jobs grew by nearly 8,000 in 2007 and by another 6,500 jobs in the twelve months ending July, 2008. Barlow, noting changes in global markets, the environment, security concerns and the aging of the world’s population, pointed out that Sioux Falls is well-positioned in the development of those industries that seem likely to grow in future years.

Naming several potential 21st century occupations, including such innovative jobs as bionic electron tech, green strategist and space mechanic, Barlow broke out the generations now in the workforce and their unique



Ed Barlow takes a look into South Dakota's future at the workforce development seminar in Sioux Falls.

attributes. Citing changes in demographic and ethnic realities, he discussed the impact of population growth in South Dakota and around the world on the numbers and types of available positions throughout

the 21st century—and pointed out that soon there could be more jobs in the US than there are people to fill those jobs.

In August, 2008, the national unemployment rate was 6.1%. In South Dakota, 3.3% of the labor force was unemployed and in Sioux Falls, the unemployment rate stood at just 2.6%. Barlow pointed to several growth strategies for the South Dakota workforce, including reduction in

turnover rates, the extension of older workers’ time on the job, the reduction of the time it takes to bring young people into the workforce plus the importance of education, lifetime learning and educational synergies to advance readiness for 21st century careers.

“By analyzing the questions employers are asking and pulling together a set of solutions,” said Mary Medema, Forward Sioux Falls workforce development director, “Barlow has given us a thumbnail sketch of the challenges ahead of us and a number of ways to meet those challenges to stay competitive and grow our talent force here in Sioux Falls.”



Industry panelists were Dave Fleck, Sioux Falls Construction; Evan Burkett, Sanford Health, and Kent Brev, Daktronics.



High marks for Starting Strong's first year

An independent evaluator has given high marks to the first of a three-year pre-kindergarten pilot for at-risk children in Sioux Falls. Dr. Gera Jacobs, a researcher at the University of South Dakota, reports statistically significant growth among the three-year-olds enrolled in the Starting Strong Pre-Kindergarten Pilot. Her findings are based on assessments given at the beginning and end of the 2007-08 school year.

"The pilot showed statistically significant growth overall in classroom quality, which research has shown leads to increased learning for young children," she said. "Similar research will be conducted in the second and third years of the program."

Funded by Forward Sioux Falls, the Governor's Future Fund and Sioux Empire United Way, the Starting Strong pilot began in August of 2007 with 85 three-year-olds. Over the three years of the pilot, 205 three- and four-year-olds in the Sioux Falls area will gain access to quality pre-kindergarten programs. The program grew out of the Sioux Falls Business-Education-Civic Leadership Group on Early Care and Education. The group was convened in 2005 by South Dakota Voices for Children in response to Sioux Falls Tomorrow II's education goal. That goal called for giving all children in the Sioux Falls area access to high quality pre-kindergarten and child care at all age levels.

Ron Moquist, CEO of Raven Industries, has chaired the Business-Education-Civic Leadership Group since its beginning.



"Society pays in many ways when children fail," Moquist said. "Those who lack the skills to get a good job are more likely to become teen parents, use drugs, commit crimes and land in prison. Society has a choice—we can invest in early education programs—or we can invest in more police, drug rehabilitation and prisons."



Mark your calendar for Taking Stock II

The second edition of the Taking Stock seminar for business leaders will be held in Sioux Falls on October 29 at the Ramkota amphitheater II from 8:30 am to 1:30 pm. Forward Sioux Falls is a sponsor of this discussion with the state's leading economic researchers and forecasters about accessing the state's economy. The seminar will focus on leading issues facing South Dakota and on business prospects for the future. Taking Stock II sessions will be held in Aberdeen on October 28 and in Rapid City on October 30.

Housing Partnership Update



Affordable townhomes construction nearing completion

Construction is nearly complete at the Sioux Empire Housing Partnership's new Pettigrew Heights townhomes. The project, located at 10th Street and Menlo Avenue in the historic part of Sioux Falls marked for redevelopment, features five 1,120 square foot units, with two bedrooms and one and a half baths in each unit, plus a two-car garage. The townhomes will be available to families who qualify for affordable housing guidelines.

"It is exciting to see this beautiful building nearing completion," said Jim Schmidt, executive director of SEHP. "Pettigrew Heights townhomes are a highly visible testimony to this community's commitment to affordable housing."



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Chairman's Report

Partnership, participation makes Sioux Falls different

In every corner of Sioux Falls you can see that our housing construction industry, along with commercial building, is still going strong. National trends and dire news from Washington and Wall Street may have slowed our record-setting growth for a short time, but the Sioux Falls economy continues to prosper. Our population is still increasing, as young people, especially, see our community as a great place to build a future. Why does Sioux Falls stay strong when economies around us struggle?

The answer lies in the reasons Forward Sioux Falls continues to grow and make a difference for our community. The **partnership** between individuals, the business community and local and state government, and between the Chamber and the Development Foundation provides us with a rock-solid base of support and encouragement. In addition, Sioux Falls enjoys fantastic **participation**, illustrated in the rising number of Forward Sioux Falls investors who understand that they

By Kelby Krabbenhoft,
Chairman,
Forward Sioux Falls



are helping to strengthen our economy today and well into the future.

In each of the areas identified as priorities by Forward Sioux Falls, we are making progress. Our Technology Business Center is set to expand, having shown its success in incubating tech companies. Our workforce development programs are among the most innovative in the region—and young people are getting the message and moving to Sioux Falls. And expanding companies are putting Sioux Falls on their short list of probable sites for a new facility.

Here in Sioux Falls, **we make things happen** by banding together and putting our shoulders to the wheel. It's something we can

be proud of, and something that business leaders and families across the country can recognize, appreciate and want to be part of. There are good reasons why we say that Sioux Falls is the best place in America to grow a business and raise a family—and you'll see those reasons in every neighborhood and every bustling company in this community.

Technology Business Center Update

Two firms graduate from technology incubator

The purpose of the South Dakota Technology Business Center is to give high tech companies the start they need to grow into other facilities and stand alone as viable members of our business community. During the past five years, eight companies have graduated from the center and moved to other business locations in Sioux Falls.

The most recent firms to make the move are Hintz Consulting, a software development company that merged with Daktronics and will occupy some of that growing business's space in Sioux Falls, and PetMedicus, an



Hintz Consulting has merged with Daktronics.



PetMedicus has now graduated to offices in downtown Sioux Falls.

international research firm developing new products for the multi-billion dollar pet health industry.

The South Dakota Technology Business Center is the first step in an on-going effort to diversify and grow the regional economy by assisting in the creation and expansion of technology-based businesses in the Sioux Falls area. SDTBC provides those technology businesses the services they need to focus on growing their companies and making a difference in the future of South Dakota and our nation.



Business groups oppose Initiative #10

Initiative #10 professes to be about open government but is in fact a gag law and an unconstitutional assault on the first amendment rights of the business community. This measure, if it becomes law, could make it illegal for a majority of citizens and the vast majority of people in the business community to support candidates for any elected office in the state. Here is how this act limits your ability to participate in the process of elections:

1. For businesses holding contracts awarded by a bidding process: Initiative 10 prohibits “the holder of the contract” from making contributions to the public officers that grant the contracts. This may not be too draconian but the ban is extended to the “immediate families.” Immediate families are defined as “any spouse, child, spouse’s child, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, stepbrother, stepsister, stepparent, parent-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, guardian and domestic partner.”

This ban applies to those offices responsible for awarding a contract. This obviously includes the Governor, any Mayor, County Commissioner and even weed control boards or water districts boards. It most likely includes city councils.

By David Owen, South
Dakota Chamber of
Commerce and Industry



2. The worst part of this proposal is for businesses doing business with “no-bid” contracts. The term “no-bid” contract is written in such a manner that it clearly includes ongoing business relationships such as those with office supply companies, utilities and regular service companies such as heating and air conditioning companies. If you sell something to the city or county directly without a formal bidding process, you have a “no-bid” contract.

The Attorney General’s explanation makes it clear that if you have a no-bid contract you cannot support ANY candidate for ANY office ANYWHERE in the state until two years after the contract ends. This ban also applies to your employees and your

family as defined above.

In addition, because Initiative 10 says groups that lobby cannot receive “dues” money, meaning support funding for administrative purposes, the Sioux Falls Development Foundation and Forward Sioux Falls would be ineligible for funding if they talk to the county commissioners about a new idea or new program.

The SD Chamber of Commerce and Industry strongly recommends a NO vote on Initiated Measure #10.



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