

SCEDC RELEASES ITS ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR

The SCEDC Annual Report was completed in early April and released to the organization's stakeholders. The report's purpose was to highlight the diverse efforts of the SCEDC over the past fiscal year (March 2013 - March 2014).

The following is a summary of the SCEDC Annual Report.

The first page highlights SCEDC executive director Jonathan Jank's efforts toward both personal and community development. The next page reviews the corporation's active marketing efforts, particularly highlighting the membership recruitment program that fostered a 300 percent increase in membership, as well as a regional award given to the SCEDC for its flier promoting the Seward/Lincoln Regional Rail Campus.

The third page reviews the SCEDC's efforts towards business recruitment, which has included multiple visits to trade shows over the past fiscal year, including appearances in Lincoln, Atlanta and Chicago.

Another section reviews the SCEDC in its ability to cooperatively work with

local government bodies. Jank promptly communicates with these various entities through monthly reports to the Seward County Commissioners and regularly attends public officials' meetings to listen and contribute to economic development-related topics discussed in Seward County communities. Jank also shares regular e-mail communication and monthly written reports with all SCEDC stakeholders.

The SCEDC also reported on its actions to maintain pertinent databases. The corporation utilizes the LocationOne Information System (LOIS) to track available properties in Seward County. Interested developers can easily access maps and detailed descriptions of sites and buildings by clicking the 'available property' link on SewardRegional.com.

The annual report reviews the SCEDC's activities in existing business retention and expansion. The SCEDC focused the summer of 2013 on renewing its business retention and expansion (BR&E) visits to over 40 Seward County businesses. These renewed connections helped prompt a

large increase in the SCEDC's membership. Its efforts in this category were also headlined by its involvement in planning the Tri-County Career Day and Job Fair hosted in York on March 25 to support Seward County employers.

The report also revisits the corporation's efforts in fostering entrepreneurship. The SCEDC is a co-founder of the Unite 16 CEO program, which educates high school students about what it takes to be an entrepreneur. Additionally, the report highlights the Dick Wehrs' Integrity Loan Fund that has recently started providing financial assistance to startup businesses.

The report concludes with a detailed analysis of building permits numbers across Seward County, a look into the promising economic future in Seward County, letters of support for Jank's efforts, and recognition of each current member of the SCEDC.

The SCEDC Annual Report for 2013-2014 displays a progressive effort by the corporation towards economic development in Seward County. Click [here](#) to view the report in its entirety.

SCEDC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TRAVELS TO MINNEAPOLIS

SCEDC executive director Jonathan Jank attended the Community Venture Network (CVN) event on April 18 in Minneapolis, Minnesota to present growth opportunities available in Seward County. CVN is self-labeled the premiere economic development program in the Midwest, creating links between businesses and rural communities in an eight-state area. States included are North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin and Illinois.

CVN specifically assists businesses seeking to explore opportunities in rural communities and helps them find the right places to start. CVN hosts three separate recruitment events each year that focus specifically on these rural economic environments. Jank exhibited Seward County and the SCEDC at the April 18 gathering.

CVN is professionally managed by Essex Capital, LLC and was created for rural communities and expanding companies in 1991. Its formation was motivated by the desire to bring high-growth businesses together to be advised and motivated by economic development professionals seeking businesses to grow in their communities.

"Emerging growth businesses find that the reduced operating costs, lower labor rates, attractive financial incentives and unified community support provide the maximum opportunities for

successful business growth. Too often, however, the community and the business never find each other," states the organization's website.

Jank's visit to the recent CVN seminar in Minneapolis continues the SCEDC's extensive marketing outreach across the United States.

"It was a successful trip," Jank said. "We created relationships with multiple business owners that are interested in relocating or expanding into rural communities in the Midwest."



SPECIAL LUNCHEON SCHEDULED FOR MAY 7

The SCEDC will host a special luncheon on May 7 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. to feature business pitches/presentations from the United 16 Community Entrepreneurship Opportunities (CEO) program high school students, as well as presentations from Concordia University's Urban Geography class. The geography students will present ideas for future development sites around Seward County. SCEDC executive director Jonathan Jank has routinely guided and visited with the students as they work towards the completion of the class project. The event is open to the public and free lunch will be provided. Contact Jank at: Director@SewardRegional.com to RSVP.

SCEDC HELPS ORGANIZE TRI-COUNTY CAREER DAY AND JOB FAIR IN YORK

The Seward County Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC) continued its workforce recruitment efforts with its planning leadership at the Tri-County Job Fair at York College held on March 25. The event ran from 2 to 7 p.m. The event exhibited businesses from Seward, York, and Fillmore counties. Approximately 50 businesses were in attendance seeking qualified employees from around Nebraska.

The SCEDC and its executive director Jonathan Jank displayed their strong support for Seward County businesses by extending recruitment efforts at the Fair. The corporation encouraged attendees to seek employment opportunities to spur on business growth throughout the county.

In the morning, York College hosted the

Career Day to engage high school students from seven school districts in the tri-county area. They learned about good and bad job interview techniques. Also, they were introduced to the six industry clusters from the Nebraska Career Connections. The Career Day attempted to encourage students to consider working in the tri-county area after high school, military training, or college graduation.

"It was an excellent day that engaged high school students to experience companies from the tri-county region," Jank said. "We discussed and explored why the region is a great place to get a job. We look forward to continuing to grow this event next year to help provide local employers with a qualified workforce now and in the future."

SPRING STARTUP TOUR FOR SEWARD COUNTY

The Big Plate and Union Bank and Trust's (UBT) Catalyst for Small Business are coordinating and sponsoring a 2014 Spring Startup Tour for the SCEDC and other Seward County stakeholders to be hosted on June 5 from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The Tour will expose participants to the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Lincoln.

Specifically, it will include a busy schedule including an Open Coffee session, a FUSE Coworking tour, Turbine Flats tour, University

of Nebraska - Lincoln's (UNL) Innovation Campus tour, and a session at UBT's Catalyst for Small Business.

The Open Coffee session kicks off the Tour by allowing participants to converse about entrepreneurial-related topics. Attendees will learn from and interact with the leaders at FUSE, NMotion, Turbine Flats, UNL's Innovation Campus, and UBT's Catalyst for Small Business throughout the tour.

SEWARD IS #1 ON MOVOTO'S 'TOP 10 PLACES TO LIVE IN NEBRASKA'

Movoto, a nationally-recognized real-estate analysis company, recently announced rankings entitled, 'The Top 10 Best Places to Live in Nebraska' and pegged the City of Seward as the state's number one. Cities eligible must have at least 5,000 residents, which narrowed down the list of candidates to 31.

Movoto uses a specific list of criteria combined with a complex scoring system to formulate its top ten. Considered criteria includes: total amenities; quality of life (cost of living, median home price, household income, and student-to-teacher ratio); total crimes; tax rates; unemployment; commute time; and weather (temperature and air quality).

Each city was given a rank from 1 to 31 based on each criterion. The community that averaged the lowest score would rank number 1.

Movoto had plenty of reasons to defend ranking Seward number 1.

"Seward (is) a little place with a big patriotic bang. Even though it didn't factor into our ranking criteria, the city is home to one of the greatest Fourth of July parties anywhere. Each year, the population surrounding this party skyrockets to 40,000, over five times the city's normal size."

Movoto boasts about Seward's low crime rate, which was rated as the safest of the 31 candidate cities. Seward also ranked number 1 in tax rates and summer weather temperature.

"Seward did fairly well in employment ranking too, with only 2.9 percent of the population being unemployed. In fact, there were very few areas in which Seward didn't do extremely well."

SCEDC executive director Jonathan Jank isn't at all surprised by the number 1 rating.

"The ranking affirms what we already know to be true," Jank said. "Seward and Seward County are great places to live, work and play."

Click [here](#) to read the press release and view the rankings in their entirety.

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