



"Find the Good Life in North Dakota"
March 2014

Introduction

There is a need to attract and retain a permanent workforce in North Dakota to fill the jobs created by the state's strong economy. North Dakota's economic expansion has fueled unprecedented growth across the state and has led to a shortage of workers for high-demand industries: healthcare, transportation, energy, engineering, skilled trades and information technology.

The need to recruit and retain a permanent workforce is evident in the following statistics:

- 25,000 jobs currently open across North Dakota; (Job Service North Dakota)
- 76,000 jobs are projected by 2020; (Labor Marketing Information Center)
- most ND businesses cite "lack of employees" as their top concern; (State Chamber)
- companies are looking to reduce the number of employees who work but do not live in North Dakota

The North Dakota Economic Development Foundation (Foundation) is uniquely qualified to address this issue. The Foundation is comprised of North Dakota private sector business and education leaders who believe the state's unique challenges can be overcome with a marketing campaign targeting potential workers. Their private industry experience and direct involvement in state workforce development efforts will help the Foundation develop a plan that attracts and retains more permanent workers to North Dakota.

Goals

Our goal with this program, "Find the Good Life in North Dakota," is to attract and retain the permanent workforce to meet the needs of our state's workforce into the future.

Strategies

In order to enhance North Dakota's image and attract a permanent workforce, The Foundation is developing a targeted marketing campaign with a multi-pronged approach that will:

- target job seekers in states with an available workforce with the skill sets we need in North Dakota, and with high under- and unemployment. The campaign will primarily target: MN, WI, IN, IL, MI, OH and PA as primary audience, and WA, OR, TX, AK, MT, SD and CO as secondary audience, as budget allows;
- target veterans and current military members who will be transitioning out of the military in the coming months;
- target existing workforce in S.T.E.M. (science, technology, engineering and math) related career paths;

- target college/trade school students in MN, WI, IN, IL, MI, OH and PA;
- target North Dakota residents to recruit their friends and family to move here; and
- create a web portal where job seekers can find the information they need to make a new life in North Dakota including active links to the North Dakota Job Service employment listings; and
- retain existing North Dakota workers and residents.

The campaign will use a variety of traditional, digital and non-traditional marketing tactics to reach each of the target audiences identified for this campaign. Our tactics will include:

- using paid digital advertising to reach targeted job seekers in other states;
- visiting military bases, job fairs and college campuses to promote North Dakota and the opportunities available;
- targeted digital and traditional media in-state to encourage residents to invite their friends and families to move here;
- educating new North Dakota residents and temporary workers to the benefits of making our state their home; and
- supporting all initiatives with media relations to increase awareness of the opportunities our state has and to enhance the image of North Dakota as an attractive place to live, work and play.

The Foundation has hired Terry Fleck and David Williamson as development directors. They will travel to businesses operating in North Dakota and discuss the benefits of the workforce recruitment and retention campaign in an effort to attract them to invest in the program. Private sector partners will be allowed to link their employment listings to the website, post recruitment videos, attend veteran and college recruitment events, and participate in the program's recruiter network.

Benefits

The benefits of this program will be a permanent, skilled workforce that will ultimately lead to continued economic growth and prosperity for the state. Additional benefits include:

- The ability to attract and maintain employees will allow businesses to meet their current workforce needs and grow.
- A permanent workforce will help businesses operate more efficiently.
- New permanent residents will help communities support their growing infrastructures.
- A larger population and workforce will attract more service, retail, entertainment and recreational businesses to the state. This will improve quality of life for North Dakotans and attract more visitors to North Dakota.
- As the opportunities available to North Dakota residents become clear, more North Dakota students will stay in North Dakota.