

Grand Forks Region EDC Awarded \$329,191 For Workforce Attraction and Retention Programming

Funding will be utilized to develop a workforce action plan, pilot talent recruitment strategies, and expanded workforce retention programming across Region 4.

GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA, USA, March 7, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation (EDC) works to enhance economic vitality for long-term prosperity and growth for Grand Forks County and the surrounding region. One of the most important issues facing businesses today is the lack of a qualified workforce. While the Grand Forks region has outperformed the rest of the county over the last ten years [growing 24% of the young professional](#) population ages 25-39, compared to 11% nationally, the unemployment rate for North Dakota is ranked first among all states, tied with Maryland.

The [Regional Workforce Impact Program](#) (RWIP) was established with an appropriation from the 68th North Dakota Legislative Assembly and provides grants to regional workforce entities in North Dakota to design and implement innovative plans to address their region's most demanding workforce challenges. The grant program is designed to encourage regions and communities to develop sustainable,



From left to right, Keith Lund, EDC President & CEO; Barry Wilfhart, Chamber of GF/EGF President & CEO; Dawn Mandt, Executive Director of Red River Regional Council; Becca Cruger, EDC Director of Workforce Development.



The Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation Logo

innovative solutions to help businesses find workers, and help workers and jobseekers connect to jobs and communities. The RWIP grant aims to support the cost of local solutions that will have a broad impact on a community or region. The North Dakota Department of Commerce recently made \$1.535 million available to eligible Region 4 (Walsh, Nelson, Pembina, and Grand Forks County) applicants via a competitive application process.

“With these funds, we’re going to work to bring people to North Dakota,” said Becca Cruger, EDC Director of Workforce Development during a press conference held on March 7th, 2024. “As important as talent attraction is, we also know how important it is to keep talent here in the region. I am excited to live and work in a region where the public and private sectors work together to innovate and solve workforce challenges. By working together, we can take a proactive approach in attracting and retaining workforce, to make a difference for our industry, our economy, and ultimately the people who live here in Grand Forks and Region 4.”

The EDC submitted two applications to the RWIP and was awarded both applications, being awarded a total of \$329,191. Several companies and organizations partnered by providing match dollars for programming which accounted for a total of \$83,494: The Chamber of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, Grand Forks Jobs Development Authority, Red River Regional Council, Cirrus Aircraft, Ideal Aeromith, JR Simplot, Northrop Grumman, PS Industries, Retrax, Thales, Meadowlark, Greater Grand Forks Young Professionals (GGFYP), Altru Health Foundation, and UND Center For Innovation.

“Thank you to the various partners who have helped fund these programs with matched funds, we’re grateful for your partnership and investment in the community,” said Keith Lund, EDC President & CEO. “While there was a large effort to submit the grant, the work is just beginning, and we are excited to see both programs' impact on our region.”

To address workforce attraction, in partnership with the Red River Regional Council and The Chamber of Grand Forks/East Grand Forks, an application was submitted to develop a workforce action plan and pilot talent recruitment strategies for the manufacturing and unmanned and autonomous systems sectors across the four counties that comprise Region 4 (Grand Forks, Walsh, Nelson, Pembina).

The workforce action planning process will include several components to create a comprehensive plan that addresses current and future demands:

- Quantify the current labor demands and project demands for the next five years.
- Assess skills gaps and align educational programs to close the gap.
- Map talent relocation opportunities by identifying areas of the country where there are higher concentrations of the types of skilled workers our region needs. Areas of the country where our region has livability, cost of living, or wage advantages will be specifically targeted.
- Compile and assess regional assets and infrastructure to promote growth.
- Conduct focus groups with regional employers, regional students nearing graduation, and external talent located in targeted geographic markets to understand what our region needs to

attract and retain them.

- Utilize data to market Grand Forks region relocation to target geographic locations, honing in on specified talent groups.

To address workforce retention, in partnership with UND Center For Innovation, Altru Health System, Blue Zones Project, and GGFYP, an application was submitted to further strengthen young professional and college student workforce retention. This application would allocate funding for three key areas: Establish an InternGF Summer Cohort Program providing up to 70 summer interns the opportunity to get connected to opportunities, people, and activities in the region. Enhance the Young Professionals Mentorship program, providing the opportunity for college students and young professionals to get connected to the community, professional opportunities, and develop professionally. Blue Zones worksite expansion, which supports the health and well-being of employees, which resulted in higher employee retention.

Mark Maliskey

Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation

+1 701-738-0238

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[YouTube](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/694227537>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.