

AIRDRIE NOW!

Airdrie Economic Development

August 4, 2009

Making our Business Community Stronger Airdrie Economic Development Business Visitation Program

Airdrie – Airdrie Economic Development is spearheading a Business Visitation Program (BVP) in conjunction with our new Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) strategy. The primary goal of our visitation program is to identify and implement practices to better serve the Airdrie business community.

To achieve this, Airdrie Economic Development has recruited an Ambassador Team of 12 local community leaders, including local business owners and representatives from the Airdrie Chamber of Commerce and Community Futures Centre West who will visit more than 70 businesses in 2009. “The information the BVP Ambassador Team gathers this year will identify key areas and new initiatives to help our businesses to better address their challenges and take advantage of opportunities to grow and expand,” said Leona Esau, BVP Coordinator for Airdrie Economic Development.

“Over the last decade Airdrie has experienced tremendous growth. While this high growth is great news for both our residents and our City, and signifies that our economy is strong, we need to ensure that the needs of our business community are being met so that our local economy continues to thrive over the long term,” says Esau. Adding, “Existing businesses can generate up to 70-80% of all job growth in a community and help to create a strong foundation for community support and pride.”

Earlier this year, Airdrie Economic Development launched its AirdrieNOW campaign which focuses on both strengthening our existing businesses and attracting new companies to Airdrie. “The introduction of the BVP is an important addition to our Department’s three year strategy,” says Kent Rupert, Team Leader, Airdrie Economic Development. “Through interviews and focus groups we will gather concrete information about our business community’s needs, concerns and opinion of Airdrie as a place to do business which will allow us to proactively address their needs.” added Rupert.

Over the next few weeks, invitation letters will be issued to our local businesses. Interviews will begin later this month and be completed by the end of November. Two Home-based Entrepreneur focus groups will take place in September and October and the Year One report will be presented to Council in early 2010.

-30-

For more information:

Leona Esau, BVP Coordinator
Airdrie Economic Development
Ph: 403-948-8844

Attached:
BVP Ambassador Team Bios

Business Visitation Program Ambassador Team Bios



Tim Bolton, Manager, Scotia Bank

Tim has been employed with Scotiabank for over 26 years and has been the Branch Manager in Airdrie for the past 8 years. He is the current Past President of the Airdrie Chamber of Commerce and is the Second Vice-Chair of the Alberta Chamber of Commerce.



Mike Brandrick, President, Airdrie Chamber of Commerce

Mike has been employed with Palliser Lumber Sales Ltd. in Crossfield for over 12 years; having started on the plant floor and working his way to his current role as Human Resources Director. Mike joined the Airdrie Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors in May 2006 and is now in his second term as President.



Pat Cashion, President, Vitreous Glass Inc.

Pat is the President of Vitreous Glass Inc., an Airdrie company that recycles glass for use as raw material by the fiberglass manufacturing industry. Pat is a Chartered Accountant, formerly a partner of a CA firm and proprietor of a management consulting business.



Jodie Eckert, Community Economic Development Coordinator, Community Futures Centre West

Jodie has 16 years experience in program coordination, consulting and leadership in the public sector. She is presently the Community Economic Development Coordinator for Community Futures Centre West and is involved in project management, strategic planning and business training activities. Jodie is also on the Airdrie Business Resource Partnership Board.



Natalie Gibson, President, InnoVisions

Natalie is the President of InnoVisions *and Associates*, an international marketing and business development consulting firm based in Airdrie. With 17 years of market research and business development experience, she serves both private and public sector clients. As an economic development professional, Natalie delivers Community Economic Development Training Programs (CEDTP) for the Economic Developers Association of Alberta.



Jim Hassett, Lawyer, Warnock, Rathgeber & Hassett

Jim Hassett has practiced law since 1996 and moved back to Airdrie permanently in 1998. In addition to his law degree, Jim has a Master of Business Administration degree. He has extensive business background as the Vice-President of two companies prior to returning to the practice of law. Additionally, Jim was formerly a Realtor in Airdrie prior to earning his law degree. He currently teaches business courses in Airdrie and coaches an Airdrie Tyke minor hockey team.

Business Visitation Program Ambassador Team Bios



Brandy Horne, Meyers Norris Penny LLP

Brandy is a Chartered Accountant with Meyers Norris Penny LLP in Airdrie. She has been living in the Airdrie/Crossfield area for eight years and is currently the Treasurer of the Airdrie Chamber of Commerce and the Whoo's Crew Parent Society (Crossfield Elementary School). Brandy also volunteers with the Crossfield Minor Hockey Association.



Lorna Hunt, Executive Director, Airdrie Chamber of Commerce

Lorna has been employed in the not-for-profit sector for 15+ years. For the last 10 years she has been employed as the Executive Director for the Airdrie Chamber of Commerce. She is passionate about her job and the Airdrie business community, as this is her hometown where her father was a business owner.



Rob Ing, Owner, Rob Ing Productions Ltd.

Rob has been a resident of Airdrie for 6 years, and is the owner for Rob Ing Productions Ltd. He has participated as a Airdrie Chamber Director, and completed various Airdrie video projects for ARRES, Volunteer Airdrie, "Hockeyville" and most recently, Airdrie Centennial "Stories of Airdrie". He is a home-based entrepreneur with a wide variety of both corporate and non-profit clients from across Canada.



Dorian Kachur, Business Strategy Coordinator, City of Airdrie

Dorian has been a resident of Airdrie for 15 years and enjoyed raising her family in the community. She joined the City of Airdrie 8 years ago and is responsible for facilitating the City's annual strategic planning process, including Council's annual strategic planning sessions and the annual Citizen Satisfaction Survey. A CMA by trade, she enjoys strategic planning and developing corporate culture.



Sue Methuen, Owner, Prairie Sun Creations

Sue is President of Prairie Sun Creations, an award winning marketing and communication solutions company she founded in 1998. Living in Airdrie since 1992, Sue has volunteered for numerous community and business organizations. Her passion for both the environment and community has led her to the launch of a new initiative called "Simple Changes" earlier this year.



John Stringile, Branch Manager, TD Canada Trust

John has more than 39 years of experience in the banking industry. He has spent the past 16 years in Airdrie and is currently the Branch Manger of the new Downtown location of TD Canada Trust. John is also a member of the Rotary Club and a Director for Airdrie's affordable housing initiative, Airdrie Housing Ltd.