



Columbus

Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce

2019 Year-End Report Drive for Five

Workforce development continues to be a top priority at the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce. The purpose of the Drive for Five is to attract new employees into careers with our supporting partners, filling the more than 700 available jobs. We do this by recruiting skilled talent and by providing educational programs to students so they will be career-ready and they will visualize their future here at home.

The effort to attract employees is paying off. Even though we are experiencing unprecedented rates of retirement, this past June (2019), Platte County's labor force was the highest it has been since July of 2013. Area schools are seeing increased enrollment which indicates young families are moving to the area.

It requires a massive effort to obtain this progress. Here is a sample of the work the Chamber is doing through the Drive for Five to grow our regional workforce.

**Here in Columbus,
we are on to
Something Good.**

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Recruitment and Retention

18 recruiting trips were taken to career fairs & technical colleges Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Drive for Five met with 1,163 legitimately interested job seekers, promoting job opportunities available through our partner organizations, and offering the quality of life found only in Columbus.

Jobs with our sponsoring businesses were promoted through the SomethingGoodColumbus.com website, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Job seekers were able to upload their resumes through our website. Those resumes were shared with all of our Drive for Five Supporters. Viewers were also redirected to apply for jobs through our sponsor's webpages as their best course of action.

Targeted marketing to cities with skilled workers who were displaced by a plant closing was a major focus. We advertised in Missouri, Alabama, Oklahoma, Colorado, Montana, Indiana, Kentucky, Texas, New York, Ohio, Virginia, Wyoming, and more than a dozen states. This resulted in 641,328 impressions on job seekers who would never have heard of Columbus, NE. 17,916 clicked through to learn more. Targeted marketing to jobseekers outside our state will continue to be a priority in 2020.

Over 360 Resumes shared with Drive for Five sponsors. Sponsors were then able to connect with those job seekers at their discretion to discuss employment opportunities within their organization, many times resulting in a new hire.

3,900 Columbus alumni received postcards inviting them to move back home.

Community tours coordinated for 60 college students from Northeast Community College and Southeast Community College.

151 job seekers came to two Drive for Five job fairs. 76 of them were from out of town.

Drive for Five hosted 4 summer intern networking events. 50 people were able to learn about the amenities and opportunities in our community. We hope to see them make a permanent home in Columbus after graduation.

The unemployment rate for our area hovers around 2.8% and an average of 700 jobs are posted at all times. Talent attraction and retention is more crucial now than ever.



Development

Thanks to our unique partnership with Columbus Public Schools and Lakeview Community Schools, the Drive for Five prepares and retains our future generation of workers through a number of school-business programs.

Drive for Five prepared 189 high school students for their place in our workforce, teaching how to write a resume and interview for a job.

The *Columbus Regional Career Dream Team* shared their personal experiences with students about the limitless possibilities of careers in manufacturing and STEM related industries. At least 1,300 students learned about exciting STEM careers through Dream It! Do It!



405 1st graders participated in *Vehicle Day*, associating those vehicles with jobs in our city.

796 students learned about careers and options for higher education options.

342 students participated in *Reality 101* learning how to balance a household budget.

During *Manufacturing Month*, 200 high school students toured local facilities.

35 high school students completed job shadows, exploring area careers.

431 graduates received a letter from the mayor encouraging them to make their future home here.

Drive for Five Programs include:

- Reality 101
- PATH Job Shadowing
- Future Problem Solvers
- Industry in Education
- Bank in Schools
- Vehicle Day
- College Week
- Education in Industry
- Career Dream Team
- Multiple Workforce and Education Committees and Partnerships
- Supervisor Training Series
- Marketing jobs and the community
- Face-to-Face recruitment
- Community Tours
- Next Generation Partnerships
- Columbus Job Fairs
- Websites and Social Media
- Utilizing the branding Campaign: Something Good Columbus!
- Targeted Marketing
- And SO MUCH MORE!

Coordination

Recruitment Readiness Retention Retraction Relationships

We could not do the work that we do without the support of our sponsoring organizations. Thanks to their commitment, Drive for Five can positively impact our community's labor force.

Our Drive for Five sponsors:

ADM
ARL Credit Services
Associated Staffing
BD Medical Systems
BD Pharmaceutical Systems
Behlen Mfg. Co.
Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Premier Real Estate
Black Hills Energy
CAMACO
Cargill Meat Solutions
Cargill Protein
Central Confinement Service LLC
City of Columbus
Columbus Community Hospital
Columbus Hydraulics
Columbus Public Schools
Columbus United Federal Credit Union
Cornhusker Public Power District
Duo-Lift Manufacturing Company
FLEXcon Company
Lakeview Community Schools
Loup Power District
MIBA Industrial Bearings
Northwestern Mutual
Pillen Family Farms
Pinnacle Bank
Platte County Board of Supervisors
Preferred Sands of Genoa
Re/Max - Steven Jenny
Samson, LLC / Ramada / Bistro on the Loup / River's Edge Convention Center
Valmont

It's not one thing – It's dozens of things!

Talent attraction is the new economic development and Columbus leads the way in Nebraska by facilitating a workforce initiative of this kind. For more than a decade, the Drive for Five efforts of recruitment, retention, and readiness have increased the size of our talent pool.

We will continue to coordinate with other organizations in the community and state who share a common vision for growing the number of skilled workers here in Columbus.

For more information, contact:

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