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Char McDowell is passionate about Family and Close Friends

Char McDowell smiles when she says her "demon friend Lynn Garza" convinced her to attend meetings of the Grant County Economic Development Council. Garza told McDowell, the Office Manager at Total Employment and Management (TEAM), that in the temporary employment business it was important to "at least go to the meetings" to support the EDC and help her business. So for ten years, McDowell has been either attending EDC meetings, on the Board of Directors since 2013, or on the Executive Board.



McDowell was born in Ritzville and grew up in Othello. She has an AA degree from Big Bend Community College. While attending BBCC, she was working at Perkins, the Moses Lake Golf and Country Club, and Motel 6, and because it was too far

to drive home to Othello after work, she would sleep in her car before going to school the next morning. She also attended Trend Business College and has worked in the hospitality field most of her career before starting at TEAM eleven years ago.

In her job at TEAM, McDowell says she is always looking for the "diamond in the rough." And when she finds that person and is able to help them get a job to support their family or afford a first home, "that's what I love about it." Her biggest challenge is "realizing everyone's degree of one-hundred percent is not the same as everyone else's and I have to be okay with that."

As a Director of the EDC, McDowell says she's "watched Moses Lake and the county flourish." Also, she says, Terry Brewer and Jonathan Smith were both able to "see the mission" of the EDC and had "great communication skills and a passion for that growth." She adds "I think that their networking is bar none." She cites as part of that networking the partnerships with port districts and the trade shows the EDC attends to keep the Grant County name out there. For people who may not feel the EDC is a help to the county, McDowell says "unless you've been there and participated, you shouldn't put it down."

The biggest positive change McDowell has seen in Grant County is the diversification of the economy. "Ultimately Grant County is governed by agriculture or ancillary agriculture," she says. But when companies come in they can pay better wages and have better skilled positions, she adds, and that way there are role models for kids growing up here. "There are more examples of jobs a child could focus on," McDowell explains.

McDowell would like to see the Moses Lake School District Bond pass. "I'd like another high school," she says. "I'd like not to have over-crowded schools." And she'd like passenger air service to return to Grant County Airport.

What McDowell likes about living in Grant County is "wide open spaces." She adds that, "being from a small agricultural community, big city life was not for me." And McDowell knows that because she lived a short time in New York City. "I felt like I needed to come home and find my roots," she explains.

McDowell is also the secretary for the Grant County Farm Bureau and in her free time enjoys fishing, camping, and hiking. "Family and close friends are a big part of my life," she says. "I like to surround myself with them," she adds. "It's what I'm passionate about."



Grant and Adams Counties Travel to Las Vegas for RECon

The Grant County Economic Development Council (EDC), Moses Lake Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) and Adams County Development Council (ACDC) traveled together to Las Vegas, Nevada for the annual Real Estate Conference for Retail (RECon) in May. The EDC and Chamber have attended RECon for four years together, but this is ACDC's first time attending with the group. "It was a natural collaboration with Adams County," said Emily Braunwart, Business Recruitment Manager for the EDC. "We are close neighbors and we share a retail trade area. It was nice to be able to promote a larger region than just Grant County."

This year the team was able to meet with over fifty companies during the trip. Over the last four years Grant County has seen over fourteen new national retail companies open in Grant County. "Since we started traveling to Las Vegas, we have seen a lot of changes at the show," commented Braunwart. "The best change has been seeing how our marketing efforts have paid off. When we first started people asked us if we were from Washington, DC, now they comment that they have heard about us or even have been to a concert at the Gorge Amphitheater!"



The EDC, Chamber and ACDC were very enthused about the outcomes of the show and plan to attend again next year. "There are more potential companies that we were able to talk to, so we can't wait for the next big announcement," Braunwart said in closing.

Washington Economic Development Association 2016 Summer Conference Held in Moses Lake



The Washington Economic Development Association (WEDA) held the Summer Conference in Moses Lake on June 7 & 8th. Over fifty economic developers attended the two day event to learn and discuss advanced manufacturing in Washington.

During the first day, SGL Automotive Carbon Fibers invited thirty individuals to tour the fifth line they have installed in the

facility on Randolph Road, the second tour of the day was at the Columbia Basin Technical Skills Center (CBTech) later in the day. The two day event was held in the lecture hall of CBTech and many local companies presented throughout, such as REC Silicon and Sonico, Inc. They were able to present about their companies and doing business in a rural environment.

Allan Peterson and Vern Jenkins with the Small Business Development Center presented about leveraging your sister city relations into an export trade mission. They shared about the most recent trip taken to Gunpo, South Korea.

Other notable presenters were Jeff Marcell with TIP Strategies, John Thornquist, Director of Washington State Office of Aerospace and Dr. Patrick Ford,

Director of the Big Bend Community College Drone Program.

"It was a very exciting opportunity for Grant County," commented Emily Braunwart, Business Recruitment Manager for the Grant County Economic Development Council. "We were able to really showcase what our community has been able to recruit and how much these companies have impacted our communities."

WEDA hosts two annual conferences, the Winter Conference is in the beginning of the year in Olympia for the legislative session, and the Summer Conference is rotated around the state to showcase communities and their industries.



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ITC Services, Inc.
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JR Newhouse Co., PLLP
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Lamb Weston, BSW
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Martin Morris Agency
Million Air Moses Lake
Moses Lake Chamber of Commerce
Moses Lake Community Health Center
Moses Lake School District
National Frozen Foods
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Polhamus Heating & Air Conditioning
Port of Coulee City
Port of Hartline
Port of Royal Slope
Port of Warden
Quincy Farm Chemicals, Inc.
Quincy Foods
Rock Steel Structures
SGL Automotive Carbon Fibers
Skaug Brothers, Inc.
SkillSource
Skone & Connors
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