



PCDC

INVITES YOU TO ATTEND THE

2022 BUSINESS HALL OF FAME BANQUET

THURSDAY, OCT. 27

6 PM — Reception

7 PM — Meal/Program



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

TONY GOINS, Director of the Nebraska Dept. of Economic Development

2021 BUSINESS HALL OF FAME HONOREE

PlanterWorx

LOCATION: JB's Sports Bar & Grill, Holdrege

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Open to the Public
\$40 Advance/\$50 at Door
Tables of 8: \$320
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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEWS



From left, Hunter Brenn, Seth Connell, Jory Holt and Jordan Wilbur earned PCDC high-demand jobs scholarships and recently returned to Phelps County to work.

Welcome Home Scholarship Recipients!

Several recent Phelps County graduates have returned to the area to begin their careers and finished college nearly debt-free thanks in part to PCDC's high-demand jobs scholarships.

Many of these college graduates connected with their career paths in high school. In addition to high-demand jobs scholarships, some also benefited from employer-reimbursed training programs.

Jory Holt, a 2020 Loomis High School graduate, graduated debt free. He earned a high-demand jobs scholarship in 2020 and participated in the John Deere Tech program, which is helping to pay for the rest

of his education. He graduated from Southeast Community College in Milford in May with an associate's degree in diesel technology and is now working at Landmark in Holdrege as a diesel technician.

"I enjoy the people around here, and I like helping them," Jory said. "Landmark is a great company to work with. They are helpful. They don't lead you astray. They will help you in any way possible."

Jory has a three-year contract with Landmark where the company reimburses him monthly for his education at SCC. The PCDC high-demand jobs scholarship helped with the rest.

Jory said he hopes PCDC investors realize the impact they have on kids.

"It really helps out in the long run, and I love that they are trying to help kids come back into Phelps County to help grow the county and just bring people back to where they grew up so we can keep families here," he said.

Jordan Wilbur, a 2020 Holdrege High School graduate, also studied diesel technology at SCC in Milford. He also graduated from the John Deere Tech program in May 2022 and is now working full-time at

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Pictured from left: Lori Larson, Holdrege Area Chamber of Commerce Director; Mark Harrell, Phelps Memorial Health Center CEO; Doug Young, Holdrege Mayor; Chris McQuillan, PCDC Board Member; Chris Rector, Holdrege City Administrator; Shane Westcott, PCDC Board Member; Ron Tillery, PCDC Executive Director; Phil Hinrichs, PCDC Board President; David Dooley, Allmand Inc. Plant Manager and his wife, Marta.

Nebraska Diplomats Honor Holdrege With Community of the Year Award

The Nebraska Diplomats honored Holdrege with a Community of the Year award at its annual banquet in Kearney in August.

“The award recognizes the benefits that flow to a community when everyone is pulling an oar, together,” PCDC Executive Director Ron Tillery said. “One oarsman just goes around in circles; Holdrege is on a path forward and others are taking notice.”

Gov. Pete Ricketts presented the award to Holdrege representatives Ron Tillery and PCDC Board President Phil Hinrichs. Several other PCDC and community representatives also attended the event to celebrate the award.

A Nebraska Department of Economic Development staff member nominated Holdrege for the award.

“Holdrege is an amazing community that is thriving. The community has more than 5,500 residents who are positioning themselves for growth,” the awards emcee said.

Community highlights mentioned during the event included:

- BD’s recent \$100 million investment and expansion and its celebration of calling Holdrege

home for more than 50 years

- Creation of new BD spin-off company, embecta, which is now its own publicly-traded company and is Holdrege’s largest employer
- Recent \$8 million expansion by Allmand Inc./ Briggs & Stratton
- \$634,000 in gap financing loans provided by PCDC for area businesses
- PCDC commissioned the final engineering designs for Iron Horse Industrial Park and is actively marketing this site
- Phelps Memorial Health Center being named a top critical access hospital for many years in a row and being named an exceptional place to work by Gallup
- New Cobblestone Hotel
- Recent \$2 million expansion of the VA clinic in Holdrege

The Nebraska Diplomats is Nebraska’s largest economic development organization. It works to provide a connection to Nebraska leaders without political, organizational or geographic restrictions. More than 286 business executives and community leaders are Nebraska Diplomats.

Apprenticeships Benefit Students, Employers

As Ryan Bowman approached his high school graduation in May 2022, he heard about a mechanic apprenticeship program at BD.

"It sounded good," Bowman said. "Free college, health and dental insurance on top of getting paid to go to college. I like to work with my hands so being an industrial mechanic – that's right where I wanted to be."

Ryan applied for the program and was accepted. A few weeks after graduating from Holdrege High School, he started work at BD in Holdrege working from 7 a.m.-3 p.m. to learn the basics around the Holdrege plant.

This fall, he enrolled at Central Community College in Kearney to earn a certificate as a registered apprentice. BD pays for his college, his time traveling to Kearney and his time in class. He also continues to work at BD as it fits into his schedule around classes.

Bowman said this opportunity in his hometown opens a lot of doors for him.



From left, Ryan Bowman, Preston Schultheiss

"I have free schooling," he said. "I am debt free. It's really helped me getting right out of high school and learning how to work and getting my first real job as an adult."

Bethanne Kuck, Site HR Manager at BD, said the apprenticeship program began at BD in 2019. BD spinoff company, embecta, also has the same apprenticeship program. Between the two plants,

10 students have participated, including one this year at BD and four at embecta. To date, no students have completed the program but one will complete it at embecta in December.

Preston Schultheiss also graduated from HHS in 2022 and was hired as an apprentice at embecta. He said this program opens up better opportunities for his future. His goal is to become a senior mechanic.

"This is a very good option for people who wish to go to college and leave debt-free while also learning about machines and how they operate," Schultheiss said. "Thanks to this opportunity, I see myself living a healthy lifestyle and learning more about myself and my job. Without this program, I wouldn't be able to live a happier more flexible lifestyle."

Kuck said the next round of apprenticeship opportunities would be seniors graduating in 2023, and applications will be posted on the company websites when available.

Scholarship Returners

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Landmark in Holdrege as a service technician.

Like Jory, Jordan also started working at Landmark in high school.

Jordan said he enjoys living back in Phelps County and being close to family.

"Overall, I enjoy the community," he said. "There are nice people, and I get along with a lot of people around here."

Hunter Brenn, a 2018 Holdrege High School graduate, is a four-year recipient of the high-demand jobs scholarship. He graduated in May from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a degree in animal science (production option). He now farms with his brothers in Phelps County.

"As long as I can remember, this is what I've wanted to do," Hunter said. "I like just being able to be close to my family and work alongside them and try to build something that I can pass on in the future."

The money he earned from farming in high school and college combined with the PCDC scholarship and other scholarships helped him graduate debt free.

"With the scholarship money I received, I was able to pay for the rest by working and raising cattle," Hunter said. "I just want to thank people for giving to a cause that gets people to come back to our county and help our community grow."

Hunter is excited to give back to the community

TO READ THE FULL STORIES ON
SCHOLARSHIPS & APPRENTICESHIPS, VISIT
WWW.PHELPSCOUNTYNE.COM/IN-THE-NEWS

by volunteering for the activities he participated in growing up here. He plans to coach youth football and wrestling and volunteer for 4-H.

Seth Connell, a 2018 HHS graduate, started working with his dad in the construction business (WenConn Building) in high school and discovered he enjoyed that type of work.

He earned an associate's degree in business administration from SCC in Lincoln in December 2021. He is now working full-time at WenConn. He works on anything from building homes from the ground up to remodels and renovations.

"I always liked living in Holdrege so I thought why not come back here," Seth said. "It's small. I've always liked that. It's where a lot of my friends are so it feels like home."

Seth also avoided borrowing money to pay for his education.

"I'd like to say thank you because that (scholarship) money was able to help me out a lot during school," Seth said. "It made it possible that I didn't have to borrow money. It helped me out a lot, and I really appreciate it."

Cassandra Shepherd entered her college years as a non-traditional student.

She graduated from high school in Arapahoe in 2009 and had been working at Phelps Memorial Health Center as a medical assistant when she decided to fulfill her dream of becoming a registered nurse.

"I was already working for Phelps Memorial, and I already loved what I was doing so I wanted to continue there," Cassandra said. Her co-workers encouraged her and gave her the confidence to pursue higher education.



Cassandra Shepherd

In 2019, she started attending Central Community College. In 2021, she earned LPN status. In May 2022, she graduated with an associate's degree in nursing. She is now an outpatient surgery nurse at PMHC.

With the help of the PCDC scholarship and other community scholarships, Cassandra was able to finish college without educational debt.

"I am just very grateful for the opportunity to be able to fulfill my dreams and serve the community, and it wouldn't have been possible without the scholarships and support I received," she said. "I'm really grateful. We have a wonderful community. It's just unbeatable. You can't beat what we have here."

HOUSING UPDATE

Study Shows Need for Hundreds of Homes

Results of a recent Phelps County housing study show a need for between 197-286 new housing units in the next five years.

“This study confirms what we knew intuitively from recent experience: Our market needs more housing for homeowners and renters,” PCDC Executive Director Ron Tillery said. “A lot more. The scope is clarified in the report and lays out the challenges we have to fill the current needs as well as our future growth.”

Tillery said if the county can come together and respond effectively to the demand laid out in the study, Holdrege and Phelps County will be well positioned to prosper.

“Our area will be able to grow in population and support economic expansion by current and future employers,” he said.

To satisfy a medium target demand over five years, the housing study recommended creating the following housing units:

- 197 countywide living units with 128 in Holdrege (57 owner occupied and 71 rentals)

Further breaking down the numbers, the study recommends 16 Holdrege homes in the \$276,200-\$368,000 price range and 27 homes priced above \$372,000. On the rental side, it recommended 24 units priced less than \$805, 15 between \$821 and \$962, 20 between \$1,015 and \$1,230, and 12 at more than \$1,242.

To satisfy a growth demand, the study recommended:

- 286 new units countywide with 206 in Holdrege (83 owner occupied and 110 rentals)

The study reported that Phelps County currently contains “an estimated 4,396 housing units, consisting of approximately 3,096 owner and 1,300 rental units. Of these 4,396 units, approximately 704 are vacant, resulting in an overall, estimated housing vacancy rate of 16 percent.”

The study recommended that Phelps County communities upgrade the housing stock during the next five years by both building new homes and rehabilitating (economically feasible) existing housing units.

“Housing units that are severely deteriorated or dilapidated should be targeted for substantial rehabilitation or, in extreme cases, demolition and replacement,” the study noted.

Tillery said that one of the challenges to building or rehabbing homes is the bottlenecks that exist in the trades and construction

CREW SUBDIVISION UPDATE



PCDC Recruits Builders for CREW Homes

More new housing construction will continue soon in the CREW Subdivision in east Holdrege as two companies are finalizing plans to build in the area.

PCDC has been encouraging local builders as well as those across the state to build homes in Holdrege’s new CREW subdivision.

Maven Builders of Lincoln is planning to build four homes in CREW similar to homes they built in Lincoln. One of the models will be 1,300 square feet, and the other will be 1,100 square feet.

“We expect Maven to build a total of 12 units in CREW depending on market response to the product,” PCDC Executive Director Ron Tillery said.

Maven is still seeking subcontractor bidding, so the construction timeline will

depend on that process. Those interested in purchasing a Maven home prior to construction being complete will have a choice of some finishes. 3-D walk-through videos will soon be available.

The other company planning to build in the CREW subdivision is Heritage Homes of Wayne. Heritage plans to build four 1,176-square-foot homes. They will be 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom homes with a 2-car garage and an unfinished basement.

Heritage Homes are built in the factory in Wayne and are transported and placed on basements. The Heritage homes will likely be completed by March or April 2023. Pre-sale buyers may be able to select some finishes and appliances and can arrange a separate agreement to finish the basement.

categories.

“Many contractors are busy and find it difficult to accommodate new projects in a timely fashion,” Tillery said. “It may be necessary to import expertise from other markets until we can develop more local capacity. PCDC always encourages developers to use its Builders Bureau of local contractors when bidding jobs, but the scale of our need may exceed the capability of some.”

According to the study, three-plus bedroom units at an average purchase price of \$178,000 and an estimated average monthly rent cost of \$640 are the most needed housing types for the workforce population in Phelps County.

The study noted the median age in Phelps

County is 39.7 years, and that is projected to either remain stable or increase in population among persons 55+ years of age.

“It is important that a range of elderly services, amenities and appropriate housing be made available in Phelps County to encourage senior/elderly populations to remain in their respective communities and, ultimately, the county,” the study reported.

The study recommended that the City of Holdrege both identify and designate up to 82.5 acres for the future development of “new” housing units by 2027.

To view the full study, visit www.phelpscountynye.com/site-selectors-market-research.

PAVING THE WAY

County Helps Fund Iron Horse Engineering

Industrial Park One Step Closer to Being Shovel Ready

Final engineering plans are being drawn for the Iron Horse Industrial Park thanks to a boost from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

The Phelps County Board of Commissioners recently approved allocating \$135,000 in ARPA funds to help with this project.

“We’ve got to be prepared for businesses, and it’s difficult to make investments like this in advance, essentially betting on if they come,” PCDC Executive Director Ron Tillery said. “When a business is ready to make a decision, we need to be ready. They may not want to wait for a year to complete plans and go through a bid process and construction process when there might be alternatives in other towns. It’s a competitive environment out there, and we’ve got to be able to offer a turn-key deal for businesses.”

PCDC has been working with Olsson to prepare the final documents to construct water and sewer infrastructure at the 107-acre industrial park west of Holdrege.

“I compliment the Phelps County Commissioners for taking that proactive position to help PCDC and the county be ready for opportunities,” Tillery said.

PCDC has already funded \$83,000 of the cost



of the plans, and the county’s funding will take care of the estimated \$135,000 cost to finish engineering plans and prepare the plans for bidding.

Tillery said he hopes that final engineering and

design can be completed in time to schedule bids over the winter and be ready to build during the next construction season.

Road construction in the industrial park would wait until specific projects commit to locating there.

Lost Way Brewery Run Club Encourages Exercise, Social Time

DID YOU KNOW: Beer and exercise go hand in hand at Holdrege’s Lost Way Brewery. The brewery started the Miles + Mugs Run Club in September 2021, and 93 people of all ages participated during the first year.

The run club meets every Thursday at 6 p.m. (and Sundays at 2 p.m. during the summer).

After a few announcements, the group completes a 5K or 1-mile walk or run. Strollers, dogs on leashes and kids or adults on bikes are welcome!

After the exercise, participants are treated to beer and drink specials at the brewery. Occasionally, the group will also plan potluck dinners after run club.

Holdrege Physical Therapy and Sports Rehab



sponsors the run club and gives a special Miles + Mugs t-shirt to everyone who reaches the 50K mark. Additional recognition is given for reaching further milestones.

Brewery co-owner Jessica Kraus said one participant ran 335 kilometers in the past year!

Kraus said the main goal of the run club is to encourage people to be active and social and help people find others to keep them accountable to their goals.



She invites anyone to “get out and be active and hang out with us.”

For more information, join the Miles + Mugs Run Club (Lost Way Brewery) on Facebook or call the brewery at (308) 995-0503.

Chief Davidson Leads Team at New embecta Holdrege Site

Chief Davidson is the new Plant Manager at embecta in Holdrege. embecta is the new BD spinoff company and is now Holdrege's largest employer.



Chief Davidson

Davidson began his new position in June. He has previously worked at Bell Helicopter, Eaton Corporation, Tenneco, Global Industries and most recently Neapco Inc.

Davidson is originally from Silverton, Texas, in the Texas panhandle and earned bachelor's and master's degrees from West Texas State University in Canyon, Texas.

He said he was attracted to the Holdrege leadership position because of the "people that make up the embecta team and the start-up of a new company."

When he's not working, Davidson enjoys old cars and motorcycles and college football. His community involvements have included volunteering with chambers of commerce and economic development groups.

Davidson and his wife, Angela, have two sons, Steele and Sawyer.

BD Holdrege Selects Kuck As Human Resources Site Leader

Bethanne Kuck is the new HR site leader at BD Holdrege. Her work includes recruiting new associates, supporting existing associates, implementing policies and procedures,



Bethanne Kuck

associate training and organizational communication/associate relations.

"Working for BD is a tremendous opportunity," Kuck said. "I learn something new every day and truly enjoy helping my teammates."

Kuck previously worked at ruralMED

Management Resources in Holdrege, the Valley County Health System in Ord and Valley County Economic Development also in Ord.

She has a bachelor's degree from the College of Saint Mary in Omaha and a master's degree in business administration from UNL.



BD Begins Remodel of "Building 2"

BD in Holdrege is giving the former Artistic Woven Labels building a facelift as it prepares to move personnel and some operations into the building.

Plant Manager Jason Sidel said 'Building 2' will house a front office for BD, a mold repair shop, a tool room, several support offices for functional use and a warehouse.

In May 2021, BD announced a new spinoff corporation, which is now called embecta. The new company's focus is on diabetes care while BD continues to produce several medical devices in Holdrege, including injection syringes.

Currently, BD and embecta both operate out of the main BD facility in Holdrege. BD owns

the facility and leases approximately 70 percent of the space to embecta. In Holdrege, more than 500 BD employees have become embecta employees, while BD still employs 180 locally.

Sidel said the former Artistic Woven Labels building will house only BD personnel. BD will maintain a syringe production area, offices, the sterilization operation and the shipping operations at the original site.

This current renovation project includes both interior and exterior work. The parking lot will be located in the front of the building, and BD will install a new monument sign in front.

Sidel said construction is planned to be complete in late 2023.

Her hobbies include spending time outdoors, traveling and spending time with family and friends. She and her husband, Andrew, have one daughter, Haley, who is an 8th grader.

Maaske Returns to Holdrege As BD's Plant Controller

Julie Maaske is the new plant controller at BD Holdrege. She began her position in February and is overseeing all financial planning, reporting and analysis for the plant.

Julie is a 1983 Holdrege High School graduate. She earned a bachelor's degree in business administration with an accounting emphasis from UNK and has worked at BD since 1986. She has been in finance for 30 years between Holdrege, Columbus East and Columbus West. She also spent six years as a project/software implementation coordinator.

"BD is an amazing company to spend a

career," Maaske said. "When I went back for my college degree while working full-time in the 90s, it was always my career goal to be a plant controller. Manufacturing is "The Place" to be, and to be able to provide meaningful analysis and support to the plant is very exciting to me."



Julie Maaske

Her community involvements include being the traditional worship director at her church, overseeing five ministries and being the principal organist. Her hobbies include music, cycling, and spending time with her family.

Her son, Andrew, 27, is a BD quality analyst and is the third generation of her family to work at BD Holdrege. Her daughter, Sara, 25, is a surgical RN in Lincoln.

Turner Technology Expands, Moves To New Downtown Holdrege Location

Turner Technology has a new location in downtown Holdrege. The technology company moved out of its former home inside of AgWest Commodities in September to a new location at Brewster Place, 414 East Ave.

Owner Gary Bren said the downtown location will give the company better visibility as it plans to increase its presence and grow the company's operations in central Nebraska. Turner Technology also has an office in Omaha.

The company started in 1992 in Omaha and branched out to Holdrege in 2010. The company provides managed IT services, software development, networking, VoIP services, security and consulting. The company mainly serves other businesses and has extensive experience with medical offices, manufacturing and distribution, insurance and financial services and non-profit organizations. In central Nebraska, Turner Technology serves clients in about a 100-mile radius of Holdrege, including McCook, Hastings, North Platte and northern Kansas.

Turner Technology employs seven people in the Holdrege office and plans to nearly double its local staff in the next year.

In the past few months, Turner Technology has been remodeling the front third of the Brewster Place building to prepare for its move. It will occupy space on the first floor and second floor. Part of the third floor will be transformed



into apartments for Turner Technology employees. The new location also includes a modern conference room with audio and video equipment that seats up to 18 people. The room will be available at no charge for members of the Holdrege Area Chamber Of Commerce and Phelps County Development Corporation investors.

Turner Technology is planning an open house to celebrate its new location and 30th anniversary on Tuesday, Oct. 25. It will include food, door prizes and other fun. The public is invited to attend.

Bradshaw Native Opens Dream Business in Holdrege

Stephanie Jensen opened Holdrege Day Spa at 722 5th Ave. in downtown Holdrege in June.

The new business offers massages, body treatments with mud, wraps, facials, waxing, eyelash extensions and spray tans.

"My dream is to be that one-stop place for bridal parties and be a place for people to go and forget about their worries and relax," Jensen said.

Jensen, a Bradshaw native, said an auto accident in high school changed her career path from lawyer to massage therapist as therapy is what helped her recover. She earned an associate's degree in agribusiness from

Southeast Community College in Beatrice and then attended the Myotherapy Institute in Lincoln to learn the art of massage. She married a farmer in the Wilcox area and has worked in Kearney for the past 5 years. Now, she has decided to pursue her dream of operating her own business in Holdrege.

"Holdrege has a small town feel and is a hub for a lot of smaller towns," she said.

She has one employee, Madison Walker, who is an esthetician.

Services at the Holdrege Day Spa are by appointment only. For more information, call (308) 999-6141.

Graphic Arts Shop Sold to Local Couple

Aubri and Dustin Nantkes are keeping businesses alive in Holdrege.

In 2017, the Nantkeses purchased The Screen Machine t-shirt shop after its owner Ray Ruybalid died. Now, the Nantkeses have purchased Graphic Arts Shop at 308 East Ave. in downtown Holdrege. Graphic Arts has been in the printing business since 1965. The couple purchased the business from Dan and Kyle Imel and will keep it as a print shop.

Since the Aug. 1 sale, Dustin and Aubri have already expanded services with the purchase of a new digital full-color printing press. They now offer full-color printing in-house of a variety of print projects including business cards, brochures, wedding invitations, direct mail pieces, window decals, envelopes, letterhead, posters (up to 36 inches by any length), vinyl banners and more.

Dan Imel is staying on board to help in the transition. He is impressed with the couple's investment in the business and encourages the local community to support the new owners.

The Nantkeses invite the public to call them for quotes on various print projects.

The business is open from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday and can be reached at (308) 995-5431.

Twin Dragon Martial Arts Moves to Downtown Holdrege

Twin Dragon Martial Arts of Nebraska has moved to a new location in downtown Holdrege at 615 4th Ave.

Owner Eric Wylie has been involved with martial arts for 42 years. He was previously offering classes at the North Park Assembly of God church gym. The new location gives the students a dedicated space.

Wylie said he currently has 47 students ages 4 to adult. He teaches classes five days a week. His teams travel across the United States competing in tournaments and often win. Wylie said his teams are well-known across the country.

For more information, contact Wylie at (308) 999-3097 or visit the Twin Dragon Martial Arts of Nebraska Facebook page or website at tdmaofnebraska.com.



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FRANCHISE/RETAIL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

FREE! Learn About Local Franchise Opportunities

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 26

4 PM at the Holdrege Sun Theater
Free to attend!
Concessions available

WHAT: Presenters: Blake Martin of FranNet, a franchise consulting firm, and Kam South of Retail Strategies. An in-depth analysis of the Holdrege/Phelps County trade area and identification of market opportunities and franchises that fit the market. Some franchises have an active interest in finding local business partners.

