



SPEARFISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**BUSINESS  
NEWSLETTER** 

Volume 6, Issue 7 | July 2021

## SEDC & Visit Spearfish Partner at Grillfest in St. Paul, MN

SEDC recently partnered with Visit Spearfish in St. Paul, MN to host a booth at *Grillfest*. The partnership was a continuation of ongoing efforts by both organizations to attract new workers, businesses and visitors to Spearfish.

SEDC Marketing Coordinator Cayley Schmitt and Visit Spearfish Marketing Assistant Jackie Robles interacted with hundreds of guests at the event, promoting Spearfish's outstanding craft brewing and food scenes, outdoor recreation environment, favorable business climate, education and employment opportunities, and quality of life.

The upcoming [605 Black Hills Classic Beer Festival](#), to be held in Spearfish's Lions Park on September 11, was also promoted during the event. The upcoming beer festival, hosted by 605 Magazine and sponsored by Visit Spearfish, SEDC and others, will feature unlimited beer tastings from breweries across South Dakota as well as live music and food trucks by local artists and entrepreneurs.

"We found the event [*Grillfest*] fit for collaboration with Spearfish Economic Development to further promote the outdoor adventure, beer and food culture that Spearfish is home to," said Visit Spearfish Executive Director, Mistie Caldwell. "Everyone starts as a visitor and Visit Spearfish understands the importance of introducing visitors to the business side of our community, and *Grillfest* gave both organizations the opportunity to fulfill our missions and are excited to see the impact it will have on the economic development of Spearfish in the future!"



## SEDC Names 2021 Women in Leadership Scholarship Recipient

Karley LaFountain, Director of Prairie Hills Child Care Center in Spearfish, has been selected as the Spearfish Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) 2021 Women in Leadership Scholarship recipient. The annual scholarship will provide LaFountain with the opportunity to attend the South Dakota Center for Enterprise Opportunity (SD CEO) 2021 Women in Leadership series to be held July 27-29 at The Barn at Aspen Acres near Spearfish.

The Women in Leadership series is in its eighth year, thus far graduating over 150 local business leaders with specialized training in communication, decision making, project management and other vital aspects to successful leadership in both professional and personal contexts. This year's program is themed "Focusing on the Future" and will feature over a dozen guest speakers to engage and connect with LaFountain and the other program participants.

“I am very honored and excited to have earned this scholarship and to be able to spend two and a half days with incredible female leaders from our area,” said LaFountain. “Getting to grow and learn alongside them is going to be an amazing experience that I get to use right away with all my staff in hopes to empower them and help them grow.” LaFountain is specifically looking forward to gaining more knowledge in the areas of conflict management and mentorship.



**SD CEO**  
*Center for Enterprise Opportunity*  
Women's Business Center

“Supporting and investing in the professional development and personal growth of our local business leaders is very important to our organization,” noted SEDC Executive Director Kory Menken. “SEDC is pleased to partner with SD CEO in helping to build strong leaders for our community and region.”



**SPEARFISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**BUSINESS  
SPOTLIGHT** 

## Black Hills Community Bank

James Mortenson is a Senior Vice President and the Chief Credit Officer for Black Hills Community Bank, which has locations in both Spearfish and Rapid City. Originally from Harding County, South Dakota, James attended college at

Black Hills State University and began his financial career working for Premier Bankcard in Spearfish. Today, he spends most days working with his credit team, helping his customers, and interacting with his fellow employees at the bank here in Spearfish.

Black Hills Community Bank's motto is "Investing in What Counts". Not only does that mean helping customers invest in businesses, homes and all the other traditional banking services that Black Hills Community Bank provides, but also investing in the community altogether. "We believe in giving back to our local community," Mortenson expressed, and that it is part of their "core purpose of making people's financial lives better."



*Investing in What Counts*

The bank regularly contributes time and money to local causes such as to The Artemis House, Junior Achievement, Realtors for Kids and Bella Pregnancy Center, the latter of which they have collected over 16,000 diapers in 2021 alone! Additionally, the bank has a Pass It On program (PIO) in which qualified employees are awarded \$1,000 to donate to a local Black Hills community non-profit organization. The most recent PIO donation in Spearfish was from Mary Zimmiond, a teller and customer service representative for the bank. She selected Bella Pregnancy Center as the recipient for her PIO.



Aside from contributing to the community through the bank, James also gives back on his own time as a volunteer member of the Spearfish Lions Club, Butte Electric Board of Directors, Spearfish Rams Football and SEDC Board of

Directors. Having been selected to the SEDC Board amid the COVID-19 pandemic while facilitating numerous Paycheck Protection Program loans and other financial support measures at the bank, James regularly provides SEDC with valuable insights into the Spearfish business community and banking industry.

“Every situation, even if very challenging, is a learning opportunity. Take advantage of those situations and the people involved to gain as much knowledge as possible,” he advised. “When business gets hectic, slow down and find enjoyment in the people you are fortunate to be around.” James clearly has a passion for connecting with and contributing to those around him. Customer and employee interaction are what he considers the most rewarding part of his job. “I will always cherish my existing relationships and look forward to the building of more in the future.”

To learn more about what Black Hills Community Bank can offer, visit their website at [www.bhcbank.com](http://www.bhcbank.com).

[Black Hills Community Bank Website](#)

### *Do you want to be featured in the Business Spotlight?*

Simply fill out the short form below! Your business must be an SEDC member to be selected. If chosen as the Business Spotlight of the Month, you will be asked to answer a questionnaire and provide a photo to be used in an upcoming newsletter and on our Facebook page.

[Business Spotlight Interest Form](#)

## Mentorship Program Seeking Mentors

The Hook Young Professionals is seeking applicants for their new Spearfish Mentorship Program. The program will connect local leaders as mentors with young professionals in the Spearfish area as mentees.



Being a mentor is rewarding not just for the mentee, but for the mentor as well. Benefits of mentoring include not only giving back and leading others towards

success, but also learning how to better communicate with younger professionals by discovering what motivates and is most important to them, expanding your professional network, and gaining insights from mentees in different areas which they excel.

The 6-month program will kick off on October 28 with meetings between mentors and mentees expected once per month on your own schedule.

Applications, provided below, are due by September 3, 2021.

[Program Overview](#)

[Mentor Application](#)

[Mentee Application](#)



SPEARFISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**THE MORE  
YOU KNOW** 

## Skills-Based Approach to Hiring and Developing Talent

Harvard Business Review | Ryan Roslansky | June 8, 2021

Evaluating employees and new hires based on their skill sets instead of their work history can help level the playing field — and help companies realize the talent they already have. It also makes talent pools more diverse and often makes hiring more effective. This is the future of hiring and development. At a time when talent is the number-one commodity in business, companies can't afford to remain stuck in old mindsets.

Here are three ways companies can upskill and reskill their existing workforce and take a skills-based approach to hiring new employees.

### **Support new career paths for your employees**

You shouldn't have to switch companies to get ahead — creating and supporting learning programs not only shows your employees that you're invested in their future, but they also open different pathways for growth internally and can evolve into new career paths.

Don't wait for the next crisis to begin the process of reskilling employees for

critical roles. Employees who see good opportunities to learn and grow are 2.9 times more likely to be engaged. Creating internal programs that identify and address skill gaps not only helps prepare for future disruptions but also helps your strongest and most dedicated employees feel secure.

### **Give employees learning time and rewards**

According to a June 2020 survey, an overwhelming number of employees — 97% — want to expand or at least continue the amount of time they spend learning. What's more, opportunities to learn and grow have emerged as the strongest driver of work culture.

Executives and managers should make it clear that ongoing education is integral to personal career growth and can be done on company time. To help foster a learning culture, encourage employees to block out calendar time for learning each week or month — and do the same. If managers have dedicated learning time, employees will be more likely to follow suit.

### **Shift to a skills-based approach when hiring**

Stay focused on skills — and the assessments that can measure them. From hard skill evaluations like coding tests, to innovative soft skill assessments, to “job auditions,” there are plenty of ways to gauge a candidate's ability to perform without relying on their education or experience as proxies. Even asking unexpected interview questions can let you see how a candidate processes information and problem-solves in real time.

By taking a skills-based approach to the hiring process, diplomas and titles can sit alongside assessments, certifications, endorsements, and other alternate methods for determining the capability and fit of a candidate. What's more, by focusing on skills, employers can increase the size of their talent pools, allowing them to pinpoint quality applicants for hard-to-fill roles. Once you've hired them, keep your employees engaged and your company ready to adapt to changing demands by creating a culture of learning.



## **Business Legislative Updates**

### **Butcher Block Act:**

Small meat processors across the nation may benefit from a bipartisan bill that looks to ease regulatory barriers and bring new grant and loan opportunities through the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Butcher Block Act, co-sponsored by U.S. Reps. Dusty Johnson, R-S.D., and Abigail Spanberger, D-Va., would assist smaller meat processors who are looking to expand

operations while also giving farmers and ranchers more opportunities to get their cattle. [Read More](#)

**Forestry Seasonal Workforce Bill:**

U.S. Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.) has introduced a bill to temporarily increase the availability of H-2B visas for the purpose of restoring American forests. The bill would establish an uncapped, but temporary, carve-out of the H-2B program to permit a surge in workers to address a multi-year backlog in forest management, including wildfire restoration, long-term timber supply, and carbon sinks. [Read More](#)

**West River Nursing Program:**

Plans are underway to transition bachelor-level nursing education programs in western South Dakota from two universities to one. The recommendation comes from a state task force that spent the past year studying efficiencies within the public university system. The SB 55 Task Force has also recommended increasing the pipeline of new nurses graduating from the West River program. The Board of Regents plans to wholly locate the Rapid City-based BSN program at BHSU's Rapid City campus and BHSU would also provide the pre-nursing and applied sciences coursework that all nursing students must complete before admission into the BSN program. [Read More](#)

**Medical Cannabis Program:**

Governor Kristi Noem, along with the South Dakota Department of Health and the South Dakota Department of Education, have launched a new website to answer questions and provide information about the upcoming medical cannabis program in South Dakota. [Read More](#)

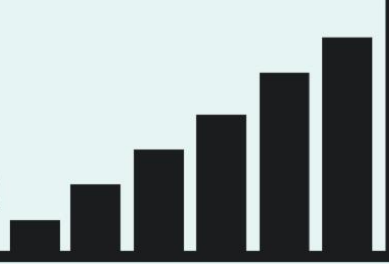
**Cannabis Consumption Ordinance:**

In preparation for Initiated Measure 26, the voter-approved medical marijuana measure, the Spearfish City Council has updated the City Code to prohibit the consumption/smoking of cannabis in public places. The second reading of Ordinance 1347 was approved on June 7. [Read More](#)

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# BY THE NUMBERS



## SD Dept. of Labor Reports:

### Labor Force 2021 2020

#### CITY OF SPEARFISH

Total Labor Force	6,256	6,428
Total Employed	6,054	5,636
Total Unemployed	202	792
% Unemployed	3.2%	12.3%

#### LAWRENCE COUNTY

Total Labor Force	13,326	14,026
Total Employed	12,918	12,049
Total Unemployed	408	1,977
% Unemployed	3.1%	14.1%

#### NORTHERN HILLS

(BUTTE, LAWRENCE, MEADE, & PENNINGTON COUNTIES)

Total Labor Force	91,437	89,895
Total Employed	88,661	79,705
Total Unemployed	2,776	10,190
% Unemployed	3.0%	11.4%

LABOR FORCE DATA IS BASED ON THE MOST RECENT  
SD DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & REGULATION  
REPORT FROM MAY OF 2021

## Spearfish City Reports:

### BUILDING PERMITS 2021 2020 YTD 2021 YTD 2020

New Residential	8	12	65	53
New Commercial	1	0	3	7
Total Permits	47	48	262	196
Total Dollars	\$9,851,112	\$5,927,258	\$38,621,947	\$26,105,515

### SALES TAX 2021 2020 YTD 2021 YTD 2020

2nd Penny Sales Tax	\$119,806	\$119,347	\$2,098,627	\$1,793,677
Hospitality Tax	\$31,478	\$21,844	\$305,126	\$261,151

BUILDING PERMITS AND  
SALES TAX ARE BASED ON THE MOST RECENT  
CITY OF SPEARFISH REPORT FROM JUNE OF 2021



## Local Development News

### BH Pioneer:

[Visit Spearfish celebrates success in 2020](#)

[DC Booth Fish Hatchery celebrates 125 years](#)

[Spearfish Strength and Fitness opens workout space](#)

[Gravel Grinder returns for 21st go-round](#)

[Band shell fundraiser still ongoing](#)

[Black Hills State University gets 20-foot tall sculpture](#)

[Black Hills Pediatric Therapy expands to Spearfish](#)

[City approves new wildland fire base at Black Hills Airport](#)

[Cowgirl Pizza focuses on delivery, takeout in Spearfish expansion](#)

[Swedish pastries to be featured at Ruby's Roost Bakery & Coffee](#)

### Rapid City Journal:

[SURF activities affect state's economy](#)

### City of Spearfish:

[Grace Ballock Memorial Library](#)

[Zeeb's Greenhouse opens new, larger facility](#)

[awarded \\$20K for technology upgrades](#)

[Overhaul to complete Atlas building looks to bring big business to Spearfish](#)

**Other:**  
[10 Adventures Between the Black Hills and Yellowstone](#)

[Spearfish library receives \\$20K for technology](#)

[The Best Home Base Cities for Adventure Enthusiasts](#)

[Black Hills Blade and Axe offers adventure, skill recreation](#)

[DC Booth Hatchery celebrating 125th birthday with events all summer long](#)



## Get Involved in the Community!

### Women in Networking Luncheon

Hosted by SD CEO  
Tuesday, July 13, 2021 | Noon  
Spearfish Holiday Inn Convention Center  
[Learn More Here](#)



### Lunch & Learn: Creating a Living Financial Plan

Hosted by The Hook Young Professionals  
Wednesday, July 14, 2021 | Noon  
The Joy Center  
[Learn More Here](#)



### Canyon Acoustic Series

Hosted by Crow Peak Brewing & Spread the Tunes  
Wednesday, July 14, 21 & 28, 2021 | 6:00 PM  
Spearfish City Park  
[Learn More Here](#)



### Festival in the Park

Hosted by The Matthews Opera House  
July 16 - 18, 2021 | 4:00 to 10:00 PM  
Spearfish City Park  
[Learn More Here](#)



### Gone Fishing Mixer

Hosted by Spearfish Chamber of Commerce

Thursday, July 29, 2021 | 4:00 to 6:00 PM  
Black Hills Energy Sports Complex  
[Learn More Here](#)



**Walk to End Hunger**  
Hosted by BetterLife  
Sunday, August 8, 2021 | 7:00 AM to Noon  
Salem Park  
[Learn More Here](#)



**Devil's Tower Yellow Jacket Golf Classic**  
Hosted by BHSU & White's Canyon Motors  
Friday, August 13, 2021 | 11:00 AM  
Golf Club at Devils Tower  
[Learn More Here](#)



**Hot Rods for Hatcheries Car Show**  
Hosted by White's Queen City Motors &  
DC Booth Historic Fish Hatchery and Archives  
Saturday, August 14, 2021 | 8:00 AM to Noon  
[Learn More Here](#)



Please share your upcoming events with [Cayley Schmitt](#), SEDC Marketing Coordinator, to be included in the upcoming SEDC monthly newsletters.

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## Share the News!

Did you know that our monthly electronic SEDC Business Newsletter is

**ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY, COST-EFFECTIVE,  
AND EASY TO SHARE?**

Keep your employees informed on local business happenings  
by sharing this email with them!

Past SEDC Business Newsletters can also always be found  
on the SEDC Website under the News tab.

[SEDC Newsletter Archives](#)

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# SPEARFISH

Economic Development Corporation

growing business by nature

**Become an SEDC Member Today!**

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Let's Be Friends!

