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For Immediate Release: October 20, 2008
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2008 Huron Area Youth Career Expo attracts 200 high school students

PIERRE, S.D. - The South Dakota Department of Labor (DOL), in partnership with Cornerstones Career Learning Center and Central Area Tech Prep, recently hosted the Huron Area Youth Career Expo at the Expo Building on the South Dakota State Fair Grounds. The Career Expo was held in conjunction with the annual Post-High Planning Day. Students could meet with both local businesses and with recruiters from post-secondary institutions.

While the Career Expo is geared primarily toward area students, there are many short- and long-term benefits for the participating businesses. Exhibitors have the opportunity to promote their industry or profession to both students and educational leaders. Participation was free. Exhibiting at the Career Expo was a way to showcase businesses to the community and to become more involved in the area's workforce development.

Twenty-six area businesses set up display booths and provided hands-on activities for the students. Over 100 careers were showcased, and representatives in those specific occupations were present. "This was our first time hosting an event of this nature and we feel positive about the experience," said Robin Wallum, Manager of the Huron DOL office. "We were able to expose area youth to businesses and occupations that are available in South Dakota in an effort to retain them as a future workforce."

Information provided included the education needed for specific careers, rate of pay, how to climb the employment ladder and career exploration materials. "We wanted to give employers the opportunity to speak directly to their future labor pool by providing a venue that allowed for hands on demonstrations of employment opportunities," said Kim Olson, Executive Director of Cornerstones Career Learning Center. "Our goal was to help student make informed decisions about their education and employment opportunities."

The hosts of the Career Expo, Huron DOL, Cornerstones Career Learning Center and Central Area Tech Prep, all partner with the Workforce 2025 initiative. The mission of Workforce 2025 is to ensure a quality and competent workforce to allow for future economic growth and expansion. This event is specifically part of the Live Dakota program, which aims to retain current South Dakotans in the workforce. For more information, visit www.Workforce2025.com.

Other Career Expo sponsors included: Greater Huron Development Corporation, Huron Chamber and Visitors Bureau, Pepsi-cola Bottling of Huron, South Dakota State Fair, and Mitchell Technical Institute. Employers interested in learning more about participating in future Career Expos can visit the Huron DOL office at 380 Illinois Southwest or call 605.353.7155.