

***“National Security is job one for the U.S. Government. I can’t think of many better ways for North Dakota’s young people to support this than either through employment in the defense industry or in uniform service.”  
-LTG(R) Jerry Sinn***

## DDA Welcomes a New Year

By: Kristin Hedger

The global economic environment has caused many to throw up red flags. While healthy caution is most certainly merited in today’s world, there does seem to be a tremendous amount of opportunity for the small to medium-sized manufacturer—particularly in North Dakota. Where the coastal regions have been slammed by foreclosures, and bank instability, our banks and correlating capital infrastructure remains strong. A recent interview with CNN showed a Fargo based banker stating that out of the 12,000 home loans in cycle, his bank only processed three foreclosures in the last year.

Our stable economy combined with our ability to provide quality products on time has created us with a number of new opportunities. The reality is that the recent outsourcing model that has really only begun to boom in the last decade is creating an environment where major, big name companies look to become simple integrators. Sure, outsourcing often conjures notions of overseas production, but our strength is our relative ease to provide transparency into our operations and quality of our products.

This year, the Dakota Defense Alliance is looking to be much more active and successful in providing added business development and market visibility to our members. One of the most recent events we hosted was a partnership event with Operation Intern, a state program with the Department of Commerce that will provide matching funds to your company should you choose to hire an intern. I would encourage you to consider this. I have heard of cost savings to companies in the hundreds of thousands when interns come to review your processes and production methods. We have also been contacted by a number of Bismarck State College graduates who would like to pursue a career with a North Dakota company. In particular, these students seem to be very interested in manufacturing. Please let NeTia know if you are interested in reviewing their credentials.

We have three contracts pending that could provide room for collaboration with RFID, metal fabrication, and software configuration. I will provide you with an update when I know more about these contracts, but I thought I would let you know they are in the hopper.

I would also like to welcome our new member companies—Pedigree Technologies from Fargo, Agri-Cover from Jamestown, General Atomics from San Diego, Patriot Systems USA, Minnesota, Salt Mines in Ellendale, ND and Steffes Corporation in Dickinson.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have or contacts you would like for me to line up for your company.

## 2009 DC Flyout Planned for Mid-May

By: NeTia Richards

This year the DDA is organizing a flyout that will bring awareness to the Small Business Administration as well as Congress on the issues regarding the Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone) Act of 1997. The legislation was enacted with good intentions and has helped a variety of areas throughout this country; however it has failed to assist a high number of companies in rural areas, especially in ND.

Our goal is to address high-ranking officials in an attempt to change the language of the policy in such a way that would create more areas in sparsely populated areas (like ND) to the option to qualify. Once you qualify you would be eligible for more government contracts/bids, etc.

We will also cover Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) and Item Unique Identification (IUID) topics with industry leading key note speakers. The Agenda will tentatively be available no later than April 3<sup>rd</sup> which will give our valued member companies 6 weeks to plan. We encourage you will participate in the flyout this year. We are still in the planning phases so it's the perfect time for you to let me know what you want to hear. If there is a particular area of interest, industry leader, etc. that you would like to have available or speak at during one of our socials. Please call or email me with suggestions. This is a chance for you to tell us what we can do to help you so please take advantage of it.

## Beyond Lean, Go Green Initiative

By: NeTia Richards

The DDA will be announcing its "Beyond Lean, Go Green" initiative that will specifically be developed as a challenge for DDA member companies! We will send out program outlines, milestones, timelines, incentives and awards information after we have made an official announcement during an upcoming IVN session scheduled for April 8<sup>th</sup>. We will broadcast throughout ND, so chances are a site is close to you and we highly encourage you to attend a session. You will be able to ask questions/comment and add suggestions if you would like.

There are several exciting projects going on for the DDA this year and we look forward to helping you in any way we can.

**Check out changes to the website: [www.dakotadefensealliance.com](http://www.dakotadefensealliance.com)**