

Albuquerque Economic Development Announces National Search for New President

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. – June 08, 2020 – [Albuquerque Economic Development, Inc.](#) (AED) announced today a national search for a new president to replace AED’s president of 25 years, Gary Tonjes, who will retire on July 31. AED is partnering with [The PACE Group](#), a leading economic development executive search firm, to recruit a talented community leader to drive economic growth in Albuquerque.

AED is a private, nonprofit organization whose mission is to recruit new employers and industry, and help local companies grow to generate quality job opportunities for the Albuquerque metro area. AED provides confidential site selection assistance to businesses considering the area for expansion and new investment.

“AED’s Board of Directors initiated a national search seeking a president who will capitalize on our communities’ strengths and who will have the opportunity to make a meaningful, significant and lasting impact in the Albuquerque metro area and the state of New Mexico,” said Eric Weinstein, Chair of AED. “Never before has our city and state been better positioned and more poised for economic growth in light of recent economic shifts. AED sits in a position of strength, as a private, member-funded economic growth engine. Our next president will have immense opportunities to succeed, and our board enthusiastically endorses a national search to find the best candidate available for our organization and our community.”

Albuquerque is home to some of the most successful, innovative industries and serves as a major economic crossroad in the American Southwest. Albuquerque’s business-friendly environment and top-tier network of research centers and incentives attracts industries looking for a highly skilled workforce, low cost of doing business and quality of life. Inc. Magazine named Albuquerque one of the top cities for starting a business in 2020, and SmartAsset ranked Albuquerque fifth overall for Women in Tech.

"We find ourselves in unique economic times, with global supply chains being disrupted and a heightened focus on the importance of jobs to our economic health," Weinstein said. "AED's focus on economic based jobs, which begets broader job growth, will be the catalyst that lifts the economic tide for our community."

The AED president plays a key role in the community, working with business leaders, elected officials and other organizations to increase economic opportunities for businesses and residents. Mr. Tonjes joined AED as president in 1994. During his tenure, AED helped successfully recruit companies to the region, including Facebook, Fidelity Investments, HP, Netflix, NBCUniversal and TempurPedic, among others.

“On behalf of the AED Board, we congratulate Gary Tonjes on his great run at AED over the last 25 years, and we appreciate his decision to enjoy his well-earned retirement, but we will surely miss him,” said Joe Farr, Chair-elect of AED. “By conducting a national search with a firm that specializes in recruiting economic development leaders, we’re positioning AED to continue to build on the strong foundation that

Gary and the staff have built to this point. We're excited for the future of AED and the future of Albuquerque. With the pandemic and the loss of jobs across the board in pretty much every city and state in the country, AED's mission to help bring jobs to New Mexico has taken on a new level of importance."

AED's Board of Directors contracted The PACE Group to conduct the nationwide search, leveraging the firm's expertise in economic development. The PACE Group has established relationships with economic developers, community leaders and board members across the country.

For more information about AED and the search, please visit: www.abq.org.

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About Albuquerque Economic Development, Inc.

AED is a private, nonprofit membership organization whose mission is to recruit business and industry, help local companies grow and generate quality jobs and opportunities throughout the Albuquerque metro area. AED provides confidential assistance to businesses considering the area for expansion and new investment. Since its creation in 1960, AED has recruited more than 240 companies and more than 35,000 jobs to the Albuquerque metro area. For more information about AED, visit www.abq.org or call 505-705-3777.

About The PACE Group

The PACE Group is a leading executive search firm, specializing in recruiting executive leadership for economic development organizations and governments across the United States. For more information, please visit thepacegroup.com.

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