

# THE FLASH

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## SUCCESS UPDATE: UNITED HEALTH GROUP

In 1998, Minneapolis-based United Health Group secured the services of a site selection firm and began the site selection process for a new customer service center for its Uniprise operating business. United Health Group is a diversified health and well-being company and Uniprise manages the benefit programs of the nation's leading businesses. Madison and Eau Claire ultimately made the "short list" of potential locations, along with sites in Minnesota. Scott Reigstad, Director of Forward's Central Region office, worked with the economic development community in the



Madison area, while Ken McAdams, Director of Forward's Western Regional Office, partnered with officials in the Eau Claire area. United Health officials and their site selection firm met with COMMERCE representatives in early 1999 in Madison, as well participated in separate meetings with Eau Claire and Madison government, education and development leaders. On April 8, 1999, United Health Group announced its plans to open a new Uniprise customer service center in Eau Claire that would create 300 jobs and provide claims processing services for over 1.2 million people enrolled in the company's Medicare and Medicaid health plan programs.

Since the Eau Claire Uniprise customer service center opened in 1999, the facility has experienced continued and steady employment growth. The initial 300 jobs provided by the company has increased to 500 employees currently. In addition, with United Health Group's acquisition of AmeriChoice, a leading company engaged in facilitating health care benefits and services for state Medicaid beneficiaries, employment at the Eau Claire location will increase again. It was recently announced that another 100 employees will be hired by March 2004, bringing the total employment to 600; double the number of jobs provided by the original project in 1999. We thank United Health Group for their investment in Wisconsin and congratulate them on their success.

## NEW E-MAIL CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED: TARGETS CORPORATE EXPANSION DECISION-MAKERS

Over 1,840 business site selection consultants and real estate executives across the U.S. have begun receiving twice-monthly e-mail economic development bulletins from Forward Wisconsin. The goal of this



ongoing e-mail campaign is to promote top-of-mind awareness of Wisconsin as a business expansion destination. The e-mails are intentionally brief to increase readership. They are also limited to two topics per communication, with hot links to more information on each subject. The first bulletin went out December 1 and included details on the phasing in of the single sales factor tax and the state's "Grow Wisconsin" economic development plan. Upcoming topics will include the Wisconsin's elimination of sales tax on energy used in manufacturing and the streamlining of the regulatory review process for siting new energy projects. The bulletins conclude with a request to contact Forward Wisconsin for more information.

## KEN MCADAMS TO LEAVE FORWARD WISCONSIN

Ken McAdams, Forward Wisconsin's Western Regional Director, has announced his retirement and will be officially leaving Forward Wisconsin at the end of January.



Ken has been a fixture in the Eau Claire office for over 13 years and has worked on dozens of successful business attraction projects during that time. He annually organized the Twin Cities market development trip and assisted with many special marketing events over the years. "Wisconsin citizens may never know the extent of Ken's role in attracting jobs to the state, but his efforts have truly contributed to the economic well-being of Wisconsin," said Forward President Mike Armiak. Newsletter readers that know Ken are encouraged to send pictures, notes, letters or stories as a memory book is being written for him. Items may be e-mailed to [info@forwardwi.com](mailto:info@forwardwi.com) or mailed to our Madison office. Ken may be reached at the Eau Claire office through the end of Dec. at 715.833.6666. We wish Ken well in his retirement.

## SEASON'S GREETINGS

The Forward Wisconsin staff wishes to extend to you, our partners, investors, supporters and friends, a safe and prosperous holiday season. It is at this time that we reflect upon our past year and thank all of you for your support, guidance and friendship. For those of you wishing to contact us during the last two weeks of December and early January, our Madison office will be open December 22, 23, 26, 29 and 30, as well as January 2, 2004. Thank you again for your on-going support of Forward Wisconsin!

