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GJ makes top 25 of Forbes' list

By CARRIE MARFITANO/The Grand Junction Daily Sentinel

Thursday, April 02, 2009

Grand Junction cracked the top 25, making it to No. 24, on the Forbes 2009 Best Small Places for Business and Careers list.

In 2008, the city was No. 26.

Grand Junction was the only small metro area in Colorado in the top 25. Four Colorado cities made the top 25 list for the larger metro areas: Fort Collins at No. 2, Colorado Springs at No. 10, Denver at No. 14 and Boulder at No. 20.

Forbes considers factors such as colleges, cost of doing business, education attainment and the projected job growth to determine the rankings.

“The thing that’s exciting for us is the fact we’re actually in the top 25 in the country, the only one in Colorado. That’s a huge deal,” said Ann Driggers, president and chief executive officer of the Grand Junction Economic Partnership.

Driggers said Grand Junction climbed in the rankings because of the job and wage growth last year. She said the aim of the Economic Partnership is to attract new companies and jobs to the area, and the Forbes ranking helps.

The sliding oil and gas industry could lower Grand Junction’s rating next year, but Driggers remains optimistic that companies will expand to Grand Junction.

“We’re actually seeing a lot of interest from people outside the area right now,” she said.

Best small places
for business and careers

1. Sioux Falls, S.D.
2. Greenville, N.C.
3. Morgantown, W.Va.
4. Bloomington, Ind.
5. Columbia, Mo.
6. Bismarck, N.D.
7. Fargo, N.D.
8. Lafayette, Ind.
9. Iowa City, Iowa
10. Auburn, Ala.
11. Charlottesville, Va.
12. Bloomington, Ill.
13. Rapid City, S.D.
14. College Station, Texas
15. Billings, Mont.
16. Las Cruces, N.M.
17. Santa Fe, N.M.

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18. Bend, Ore.
 19. Bowling Green, Ky.
 20. Ames, Iowa
 21. State College, Pa.
 22. Ithaca, N.Y.
 23. Athens, Ga.
 24. Grand Junction, Colo.
 25. Corvallis, Ore.
- Source: Forbes.com

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