

JOB FAIR PROVIDES 'VISIBILITY' FOR PROJECT 1000

From Oklahoma Corporation Commission

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) Making Project 1000 happen is a little like painting a picture on new canvas: it has to be made visible before it can be understood and appreciated, says Oklahoma Corporation Commissioner Ed Apple.

Project 1000 is a public and private partnership to create more jobs in Oklahoma for Oklahoma college graduates by getting 1,000 Oklahoma companies to hire at least one more Oklahoma college graduate this year than they planned to hire.

To help create visibility, understanding and appreciation, Apple, who is chairing Project 1000 at the request of Gov. Frank Keating, is seeking Oklahoma business firms and college seniors to participate in a job fair on April 9 at the State Capitol Building. The goal is to bring together at least 250 business organizations and as many as possible graduating seniors who would like to put their job skills to work in Oklahoma.

"The Project 1000 job fair is a starting point, a first effort to get Oklahoma business firms and soon-to-be college graduates together for some face to face conversation about jobs and career opportunities in Oklahoma," Apple said.

"Project 1000 is a different concept of economic development for those who are accustomed to thinking in big numbers. A new company locating in Oklahoma that would create 1,000 jobs would draw immediate attention while creating 1,000 more in-state jobs for Oklahoma college graduates one at a time would go almost unnoticed, but it would have about the same economic impact in terms of salaries paid, goods and services purchased and taxes collected," explained Apple, who worked in business and banking before being appointed to the Corporation Commission in January 1995.

Providing more job opportunities through Project 1000 is also more reliable than depending on one company, Apple said, noting that Micron Technology, a computer chip manufacturer that once considered Oklahoma as the location for a new plant, has suspended plans to build the new plant in Utah. "That's about 4,000 anticipated jobs lost because of a change in market conditions in one industry," he noted.

Apple emphasized that Project 1000 is not a Corporation Commission function, nor funded with state money.

"It is a joint venture with many concerned groups, however, I feel that any legislator, any elected official or any state agency has an obligation to provide whatever support he, she or it can to help Oklahoma grow and prosper whenever an opportunity presents itself," he said.

The job fair on April 9 is being organized and managed by college placement directors from several state universities, and all state colleges and some private schools are providing job fair information to interested students through their career placement offices.

The state Department of Commerce, the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission and the Regents for Higher Education are participating in Project 1000 in their areas of occupational and career development expertise, and the state Chamber of Commerce, the United Federation of Independent Businesses and many other community organizations are also assisting, Apple said.

Oklahoma companies interested in participating in the job fair can get more information by contacting Apple at the Corporation Commission by phone at (405) 521-2264, and college seniors can get participation information by contacting the placement office at their schools, Apple said.

*"Knowledge is of two kinds; we know a subject ourselves,
or we know where we can find information upon it."*

Samuel Johnson