

## SJEDS celebrates 20 years of service

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FARMINGTON — In 20 years, San Juan Economic Development Service, or SJEDS, has created business opportunities and high-paying jobs in San Juan County.

"We are the first point of contact for businesses looking to relocate or expand in San Juan County," Executive Director Margaret McDaniel said June 10, during an SJEDS corporate meeting that celebrated the organization's 20th anniversary.

McDaniel spoke about some of the businesses that she assisted in securing property in the region. Two that she takes pride in are Federal Express and Pepsi — both locations in Aztec.

"Businesses call us and want to know what's available — land, buildings, incentives," she said. "Once a company decides (to come here) we throw all of our resources behind it."

All of the services provided by SJEDS to these businesses are confidential, and McDaniel said SJEDS has earned the respect of these companies by sticking to that philosophy.

SJEDS opened its doors in June 1989. It followed in the footsteps of other economic development organizations in the community starting with the Town of Farmington Industry and Research Committee in 1961. Basin Industrial was created in 1964, followed by the Farmington Industrial Development Service, which incorporated in 1965.

SJEDS came next under the leadership of Dan Graham, who served from 1989 to 1991. Bill Davis took over in 1991 and hired McDaniel as his assistant in 1993. When Davis left the position in 1995, McDaniel took over as the executive director.

"I've grown to appreciate very much the work Margaret does," said Tommy Roberts, past-president of SJEDS. "She is the key to making SJEDS work."

McDaniel provides advocacy to business and to industry. She often attends the state legislature as a proponent of industry and she assists existing businesses in securing funds for training and growth opportunities.

It is her passion and that of her board that makes the organization work, according to Carol Spencer, incoming board president. "There are two types of organizations: Formal organizations ... and those with heart made up of people with passion. That is this organization."

McDaniel believes that comes from a community that believes in business.

"This is a great community," McDaniel said. "You all understand and are willing to work together to make the sacrifice to make these companies grow. ... It's really about family and people."

Roberts added that he is ready for SJEDS to spend another 20 years providing economic services in San Juan County. "We look forward to creating an enhanced vision of economic development. We move forward as a group of individuals who see a need for sound economic development.

For more information about San Juan Economic Development Services log onto [www.sanjuaneds.com](http://www.sanjuaneds.com).

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