



**Casper Area Economic Development Alliance Welcomes New Incubator Manager DeAnna Adams**



CAEDA has selected DeAnna Adams as the director of the Casper Area Business Innovation Center (Innovation Center). Ms. Adams currently manages the Mississippi Technology Alliance, a business incubator in Jackson, Mississippi; she comes to the Casper project with a wealth of experience, knowledge, and ideas. The highly competitive selection process for a director began last fall with 37 applicants. “We were very impressed with DeAnna’s organizational skills, professional accomplishments and passion for incubators in general,” said CAEDA Board Member Tim Kugler, who was part of the hiring committee for the position. DeAnna was introduced to the media, CAEDA investors and others involved with the incubator project at a press conference on Thursday, March 11, 2010.

DeAnna was a small business owner for over twenty years before she began working with incubators in 2003. She guided the growing Mississippi Technology Alliance, located at the Jackson State University e-Center, through a million dollar, 30,000 square foot renovation. Since that incubator’s inception, graduates of the program have created more than 500 jobs in their community. In addition, she has worked closely with four other incubator programs in Mississippi to help them become viable.

Throughout her career, DeAnna has received numerous awards, including being recognized as one of Mississippi’s Fifty Leading Business Women and Waldoff’s Department Store Woman of the Year. She works with the Boys and Girls Club of America and the Bootstrap Program at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, which is a program to mentor at risk youth. DeAnna is also highly involved with the National Business Incubation Association and holds an Incubator Professionals Certificate from that organization.

DeAnna is excited about coming to Casper and plans to relocate here in April. “I’m thrilled with the prospect of a project of this magnitude,” she said. DeAnna will begin working with entrepreneurs immediately. “While the construction will be a top priority, we don’t have to wait for the building to be finished for her to begin offering services to entrepreneurs,” said Robert Barnes, President & CEO of CAEDA.

DeAnna will also be taking an active role in the planning and design of the facility. The Innovation Center will be located in the old AMOCO administration building in the Platte River Commons. The historic building will be renovated and expanded into a 40,000 square foot multi-use facility with an emphasis on technology. The project has reached its funding goal of \$10.5 million and is currently in the design and development stages. Partners and contributors to the Innovation Center include the Wyoming Business Council, Amoco Reuse Agreement Joint Powers Board, Economic Development Administration, Economic Development Joint Powers Board, Housing and Urban Development, American National Bank, Casper College, City of Casper, First Interstate Bank, Hilltop National Bank, Natrona County, the Wal-Mart Foundation and Wells Fargo.