

**Welcome Paul Kleinwachter!**

The Initiative Foundation welcomes Paul Kleinwachter as the new Business Finance Officer for Economic Development. Paul will provide support to the business financing programs and economic development activities of the foundation via analysis and review of economic development projects and loan guaranty requests.

Paul's professional experiences include 23 years of lending and bank administration; mostly in institutions located in out-state Minnesota including Worthington, Atwater, St. Michael, Rogers and Monticello.

Paul is replacing former Business Financing Officer Ashley Vargo. Ashley left the Initiative Foundation to pursue her career as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). She began her internship with LarsonAllen on January 2, 2008. We will miss Ashley however we know Paul will do an outstanding job filling this position.

Please feel free to contact Paul at [pkleinwachter@ifound.org](mailto:pkleinwachter@ifound.org) or 320-631-2009 for your business financing needs.

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**Skyrocketing Health Insurance:**

*One of many pulse-pounding topics at the Minnesota Oomph Conference.*

March 6th, St. Cloud Civic Center

Register today at [www.ifound.org/oomph](http://www.ifound.org/oomph).

To tackle the looming issue of community health in central Minnesota, leaders and pioneers are needed now. Today, there is no question that the consequences of sedentary lifestyles and poor nutrition are impacting our communities, businesses, schools and nonprofits. Presented by the Initiative Foundation and IQ Magazine, this high-energy event will reveal the big picture through powerful trends, practical advice and inspiring stories of local success.

Do employee health and wellness programs really pay off? Designed for business leaders and HR pros, one breakout session will introduce some of central Minnesota's most cutting-edge and results-driven programs that prioritize employee health, reduce absenteeism, increase productivity and manage skyrocketing health insurance premiums. A Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota expert will answer questions and discuss the latest evidence and model programs.

If you don't consider yourself a healthnut, but you do care about the health and future of our

communities, this conference is designed for you. Give us one day, and we'll give you some *oomph!*

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### **Anderson Brothers Family Fund**

In partnership with the Initiative Foundation, the Anderson Brothers Family Fund is accepting grant inquiries from now through mid-March for projects beginning this summer. This fund's advisory committee has identified economic development projects as a funding priority. Grants from this fund can be made to nonprofits and local government agencies and range in size from \$1,000-\$5,000. Projects must be volunteer-driven and demonstrate financial need within Crow Wing County, southern Cass County, northern Morrison County (including Little Falls) or the Park Rapids area. For more details visit:

[www.ifound.org/news\\_newsroom.php?NWArticleID=137](http://www.ifound.org/news_newsroom.php?NWArticleID=137)

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### **VISTA (Volunteer In Service To America)**

The Initiative Foundation is currently looking for project sites to host a full-time VISTA volunteer for one year starting August 2008. VISTA (Volunteer In Service To America) is a national service program like the Peace Corps that places members in nonprofits and local government agencies to help in the fight against poverty. While serving, VISTA members receive a modest monthly living stipend, an end-of-service cash or education award, medical coverage and child care assistance if eligible. *Inquiries will be accepted from potential project sites until February 8.* For more details visit:

[www.ifound.org/news\\_newsroom.php?NWArticleID=136](http://www.ifound.org/news_newsroom.php?NWArticleID=136)

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### **INTERNATIONAL MARKET RESEARCH A Hands-on Workshop**

*Saint Paul, Minnesota, Thursday, February 7, 2008*

In this hands-on computer workshop, you'll learn where and how to find the detailed and accurate market information that is so pivotal to your success in the international marketplace.

You'll learn to ask the right questions:

- Is there a market for my product or service outside of the United States?
- Which markets are most – and least – promising?
- What product modifications and regulations apply?
- Where do I find distributors and resellers?

Don't miss this opportunity to sharpen your international market research skills and get the competitive edge you'll need.

Advanced registration is required, Space is limited.

Fee \$75.00

Make check payable to the Minnesota Trade Office.

Mail registration to:

Department of Employment and Economic  
Development, MTO-Education,  
1st National Bank Building  
332 Minnesota Street, Suite E200  
St. Paul, MN 55101-1351

Email registration to: [mto.edu@state.mn.us](mailto:mto.edu@state.mn.us)

Fax registration to: 651.297.4265

Telephone registration to: Gloria Henck at 651.259.7487 or 800.657.3858.

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### **"Doing Business in the Southern Cone"**

You're invited to the latest in the Minnesota Trade Office's Latin America Series: "Doing Business in the Southern Cone: Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay" seminar on *Wednesday, February 6*, at the DEED Office: 1st National Bank Bldg., 332 Minnesota St., 2nd Fl., Skyway Level, St. Paul. For complete details, go to:

[www.exportminnesota.com/PDFs/DevBusiSouthernConeRV.pdf](http://www.exportminnesota.com/PDFs/DevBusiSouthernConeRV.pdf)

One of the fastest growing markets in the world, Latin America is fertile ground for foreign trade and investment. The Southern Cone Region of South America offers Minnesota companies a tremendous opportunity to export a wide variety of manufactured goods and professional services.

This latest offering in Latin America Breakfast Series, is your chance to explore those questions and more with four respected experts on the region:

- Erik Brand, General Manager, Publishing, Latin America Advisor, Inter-American Dialogue
- Graciela Cuadrado-Vielguth, Export and Marketing Administration Manager, ME Elecmetal
- Robert H. Scarlett, Vice President, Medical Equipment Exporters, Inc.
- Felix H. Valanzasca, Attorney at Law, Lundquist & Lange, LLC.

Don't miss this chance to explore business opportunities in Latin America without stepping foot outside Minnesota.

To access a map and directions go to: [www.exportminnesota.com](http://www.exportminnesota.com) - then click Calendar of Events.

Questions about the seminar should be directed to Rachel Olsen at 651.259.7492.

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*Questions about Initiative Foundation Business News You Can Use?*

Contact Sharon at [sgottwalt@ifound.org](mailto:sgottwalt@ifound.org) or 320-632-9255.