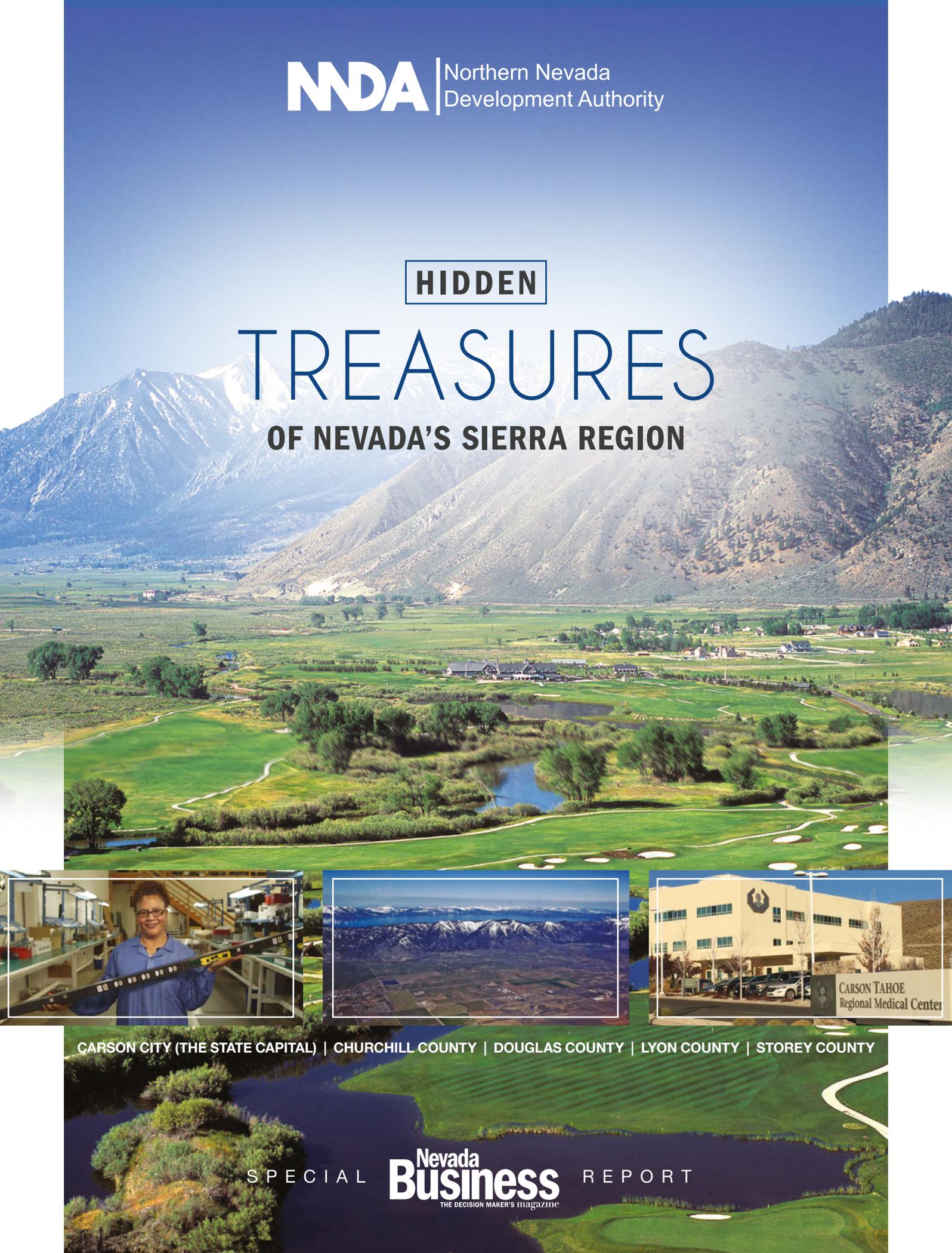


**HIDDEN**

# TREASURES

**OF NEVADA'S SIERRA REGION**



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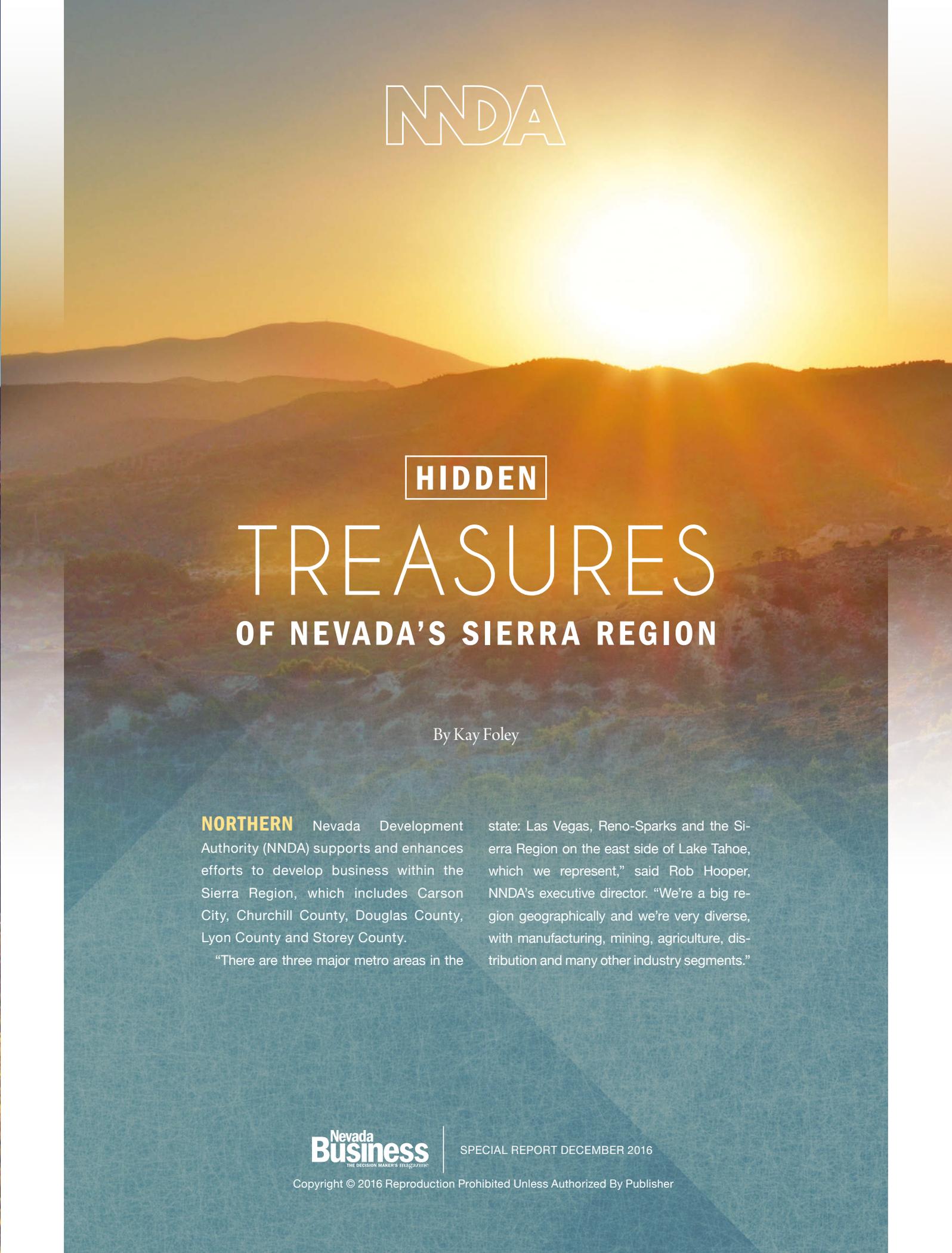
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# NNDA

**HIDDEN**

# TREASURES OF NEVADA'S SIERRA REGION

By Kay Foley

**NORTHERN** Nevada Development Authority (NNDA) supports and enhances efforts to develop business within the Sierra Region, which includes Carson City, Churchill County, Douglas County, Lyon County and Storey County.

“There are three major metro areas in the

state: Las Vegas, Reno-Sparks and the Sierra Region on the east side of Lake Tahoe, which we represent,” said Rob Hooper, NNDA’s executive director. “We’re a big region geographically and we’re very diverse, with manufacturing, mining, agriculture, distribution and many other industry segments.”

**Nevada  
Business**  
THE DECISION MAKER'S ORGANIZATION

SPECIAL REPORT DECEMBER 2016

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An industrial technology lab at Western Nevada College in Carson City. The lab offers the internationally recognized Siemens Mechatronic System Certification program.

Hooper said the Sierra Region is often overlooked in discussions about Nevada's business base.

"From 2010 to now, NNDA has facilitated 69 company relocations and 20 company expansions," Hooper explained. "These efforts have assisted companies that jointly have had \$1.7 billion in economic impact and created more than 6,000 jobs within the Sierra Region. The NNDA staff currently is working with over 300 companies that fill the NNDA pipeline of companies looking to relocate or expand within the Sierra Region," he added.

## Workforce Development

### Educating an Available Workforce

Workforce development is the most important component of economic development, according to Hooper.

"During the next decade, the manufacturing sector projects that close to 3.5

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

is key to the success of the Sierra Region. Here, students engage in industrial technology training at Western Nevada College, Carson City, NV.

million new manufacturing jobs will be needed in the U.S., and 2 million of those are expected to go unfilled due to a skills gap," stated Hooper. "Nationwide, 80 percent of manufacturers have reported a moderate or serious shortage of qualified applicants for skilled and highly-skilled production positions." These figures

point out the importance of workforce development initiatives.

Western Nevada College (WNC), with three campuses and around 6,375 students, has a strong and growing career and technical education (CTE) division focused on meeting the needs of both residents and employers in the Sierra Region. WNC, named by WalletHub as the top community college in Nevada for 2016, offers CTE courses that include manufacturing, welding, automotive, IT and other technical skills in demand by employers. WNC President Chet Burton noted that employers today are also looking for people with "soft skills" such as communication, working as a team and problem solving, so the college is including those in its CTE curriculum through project-based learning courses.

"One of our most exciting innovations is the internationally recognized Siemens Mechatronic System Certification Program, which we started in fall 2016,"

said Burton. “This comprehensive industry skills program, offered together with partner schools worldwide, has been very successful in Germany and in the eastern U.S. WNC is the first college in the West to offer this certification.”

Nevada’s K-12 schools, in collaboration with the Nevada System of Higher Education, are also designing programs to train students for new workforce requirements, offering a path to employment in technical, scientific and manufacturing fields. For example, WNC’s Jump Start College program allows juniors and seniors to enroll in WNC classes while still in high school. “They can either continue their education at WNC or step into a technical job right out of high school,” said Burton.

Another example of collaborative programs is the Carson City School District’s announcement earlier this year regarding a new curriculum to support evolving workforce needs.

“Carson High School is starting a manufacturing program in response to the prediction of increased jobs at all levels of career ladders in high-skill, high-wage jobs where our students will have the opportunity to earn numerous college credits through a partnership with Western Nevada College,” said Michele Lewis, program administrator for Carson City School District’s CTE.

“We are thrilled with the opportunity to collaborate with WNC’s Jump Start College program in advanced manufacturing and for students to be able to earn nationally recognized certifications,” she added.

Douglas and Lyon counties have also boosted efforts to better prepare students in the region for the opportunities ahead.

Douglas High School recently became home to a state-of-the-art, 25,000 square foot Science, Technology, Engineering

**A TRAINED WORKFORCE**

**6,375**  
**WESTERN NEVADA COLLEGE**  
Number of students enrolled in applied science, CTE, construction management, analytics, & health programs (WNC)

**87.2%**  
**SIERRA REGION HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION**  
Combined High School graduation rate (NevadaReportCard.com)

and Math (STEM) center. In 2008, a bill to fund the center was passed and it only took four short years for the STEM center to become a reality. Douglas County is now poised to produce students who are career-ready, competitive in a global market and assets to the region.

NNDA is a vital part of that advancement and provided an economic vitality grant to the county. The grant assisted in covering the cost of two high school teachers for Project Lead the Way (PLTW). PLTW provides high schools with assistance in developing and administering a pathway for career and technical education.

Lyon County’s Silver Stage High School has also recognized the value of CTE and, like Carson High School, has partnered with the Jump Start program. WNC has launched a manufacturing training lab at the school through the Jump Start College. The lab gives stu-

dents hands-on training in manufacturing and better prepares them for future careers.

Students also have the opportunity to take college classes from Great Basin Community College and, according to the school, a number of students complete an Associates Degree by the time they graduate.

In addition, Silver Stage High School has a multitude of CTE student organizations and is home to the top recognized Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter in Nevada. FFA is the largest student-run organization in the country. The organization has a strong focus on everything from farming, medicine, research and technology to the environment, business, communications and leadership. Students involved in the organization are helping create the diverse industries necessary to Lyon County.



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## Western Manufacturing Alliance

### Facilitating Next Generation Manufacturing

Manufacturing is a key industry in Nevada and more than 40 percent of the state's 47,000 manufacturing jobs are in the Sierra Region. Approximately 1,800 companies

statewide are involved in aerospace, foods, foundries, carbon fiber, electronics, medical devices, plastics, wood products, pharmaceuticals and much more. The industry enjoys strong growth, accounting for 3.3 percent of total new jobs in the state. Almost half of the state's manufacturing jobs are in Northern Nevada, with Carson City remaining the state's largest manufacturing city, per capita. In fact, Carson City, Doug-

las, Lyon and Storey counties have all now placed a strong emphasis on expanding manufacturing within the Sierra Region.

Manufacturing has a significant impact on the economy as a whole. Nationally, manufacturing contributed \$2.17 trillion to the U.S. economy in 2015, accounting for 12.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Hooper noted that for each dollar spent on manufacturing, another \$1.81 is



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# 40%

**OF NEVADA'S  
MANUFACTURING  
JOBS ARE IN  
NORTHERN NEVADA.**

added to the economy, giving it the highest multiplier effect of any economic sector.

Manufacturing in 2016 has evolved into offering career ladder alternatives which are somewhat different avenues of education from traditional higher education pathways. In 2014, the average U.S. manufacturing worker earned \$79,553 annually, including pay and benefits. Manufacturing also has a significant "indirect employment multiplier" due to the purchase of domestic goods and services by manufacturers, which provides jobs outside of manufacturing. Hooper stated that for each worker directly employed in manufacturing, the sector's output supports over 1.4 jobs elsewhere in the economy.

"The Sierra Region is able to attract manufacturers because we already have a trained workforce, a base of manufacturing companies and a very robust supply chain," said Hooper. "For example, if a company makes metal products, we have

a foundry, anodizers, engineering firms, molders, heat treaters and finishing shops already in place.”

Last year, NNDA partnered with EDAWN (Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada) to set up a 501(c)3 organization called the Western Manufacturing Alliance™ (WMA), with help from local manufacturers and support from Lt. Gov. Mark Hutchison. This new alliance seeks to help manufacturers throughout the western U.S. be successful through next generation manufacturing (NGM) best practices.

“Western Manufacturing Alliance is unique,” said Hooper. “Instead of being an advocacy organization, it’s looking at key strategies to increase profits and make western U.S. manufacturers competitive. WMA is an alliance of the manufacturers, for the manufacturers, being led by the manufacturers.”

## Nevada Certified Sites Program

### Adding Industrial Capacity

The dwindling availability of large industrial space within the Sierra Region has created an issue that NNDA is focused on correcting. While smaller properties are available, Hooper noted a growing demand for industrial spaces.

“We’re talking to a variety of companies about coming here,” he said. “If all those deals come through, we’ll need to build more than 2 million square feet of new manufacturing space alone to keep up with demand.”

To make it quicker and easier for manufacturers to build these new, large facilities, NNDA partnered with the Nevada Builders Alliance to create the Nevada Certified Sites Program (<http://nevadacertifiedsites.com>), a regional inventory of commercial sites that have undergone a rigorous pre-qualification process. The first certified site is located in Carson City. NNDA is currently working on certification for sites in Churchill, Douglas and Lyon counties.

## Location and Logistics Supporting Supply Chain Management

While the Sierra Region has a lot to offer, location is one of the area’s most important assets, especially for companies involved in logistics and distribution. Hooper explained that most goods from the eastern U.S. to the West Coast now go by train to California for loading onto trucks.

“It’s much better for trains to stop in the Sierra Region,” he said. “We are only one truck day (10 hours) from 95 percent of the population in the western U.S. In 10 hours, you can get from Fernley to San Diego, Seattle or Salt Lake City.”

NNDA is targeting its economic development efforts toward becoming the transloading hub for the western U.S. The process of transloading involves moving freight from

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The GE Oil and Gas building in Douglas County. The company is just one of many large manufacturers that have chosen the region for their operations.

one mode of transportation to another (from rail to truck or the reverse). Transloading is the most cost-effective and efficient way to transport goods across long distances and it's now the fastest-growing segment of the logistics industry. NNDA's long-term goal is to get "inland port" designation for a development in the Sierra Region.

"The transloading center and inland port designation will eventually provide a serious bottom-line base for the local economy," said Hooper. "Companies are already lining up; we've seen interest from all across the U.S., and even from China."

## **Carson City** Becoming "The Face of Nevada"

The state capital of Carson City is a consolidated municipality of city and county governance with a diversified portfolio of economic activity.

"There are many economic benefits to being the state capital, but along with government-related activity, we have significant tourism, healthcare, businesses and a hospital," said Mayor Bob Crowell.

## **NEVADA'S TOP FIVE INDUSTRIES**

Tourism  
Logistics  
Manufacturing  
Mining  
Aerospace

Carson City also has an industrial airport where businesses employ close to 1,000 people and Crowell said the community wants to expand manufacturing, strengthening and diversifying its economic base.

Carson City wants to be known as "the Face of Nevada," Crowell explained.

"We want to present an image that will attract 21st century millennials and 21st century seniors," he said. "One minute you can

be downtown at the capitol or in the business district, and 15 minutes later, you're on top of a mountain on a remote trail. Carson City offers a chance to experience life in a different fashion."

## **Douglas County** Nevada's Roots Grow to Support the Future

Home to the "Birthplace of Nevada", Douglas County was first settled in 1850 at a place called Mormon Station. Today it's known as Genoa and Nevada's Territorial Government was established there in 1861.

The area is perhaps better known for Lake Tahoe and the recreation and leisure activities available at the world-renown destination. However, Douglas County has been taking a strategic approach to integrating open space with a healthy focus on the business environment. This balanced approach includes a large focus on increasing its manufacturing base.

The county has one of the fastest growing manufacturing markets in the Sierra Region and companies from across the

world are taking notice. The area is home to several manufacturers including GE Oil and Gas, Starbucks and American AVK, among others. In addition, the rapidly growing technology cluster in Douglas County has grown from 107 technology locations in 2000 to over 141 locations in 2010, with that number expected to increase even further in coming years.

As part of the area's efforts to preserve history while looking to the future, Bently Enterprises has revitalized the Minden Flour Milling Co. building, among others. The silo building has been restored and converted into Bently Heritage, a craft distillery that utilizes locally grown grain to make high-quality spirits.

Zephyr Cove, located on the east shore of Lake Tahoe in Douglas County, is also home to several engineering services firms providing research and development services for the Sierra Region and beyond.

Douglas County has a strong focus on economic development and is exploring a number of creative ways to ensure that Nevada's "birthplace" continues to thrive.

## **Lyon County Agriculture and Mining**

Lyon County also has a large focus on growing its manufacturing base. In fact, the area is comprised of seven unique communities, four of which are blossoming into manufacturing sectors. Mound House, Dayton and the Highway 50 corridor, including USA Parkway and Fernley, are all successfully growing in the industry sector. Large companies, such as Bruce Industries in Dayton and Hess Microgen in Mound House already call the area home.

And, although the area is considered rural Nevada, it's not hard to get to and features a full service general aviation airport in Silver Springs in addition to well-maintained roadways and a rail center at Crossroads Commerce Center in Fernley. The center is a 3,000 acre industrial and commercial park with easy truck access

and a cross-country rail line that opens up overnight access to 80 percent of the major markets in the eleven western states.

Lyon County is also the number one agricultural-producing area in the state, and has a high concentration of dairy farms. The most important crops are onions, alfalfa, garlic, broccoli, cauliflower and leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach. In addition, the garlic farmed at Peri and Sons Farm, located in Yerington, is the primary source for Gilroy, CA, a mass producer of garlic edible food products.

In fact, as of 2012, the county's total food and agriculture output was valued at \$261.4 million. The area has 462 farms which cover 28.6 percent of the area's land.

The county is also now home to Nevada Copper, the first copper mining district in the state. Copper has many uses including applications in electronics, such as computers and cellphones. Lyon County's vast

deposits of copper were recently acquired by Nevada Copper who intends to mine the deposits. Some sites are already being developed and two other large operations are in the exploration phase, drilling at sites in Smith Valley.

## **Storey County From "World's Largest" to "World Famous"**

Storey County has recently become well-known for being home to the Tahoe Regional Industrial Center (TRIC), the world's largest industrial park of logistics and manufacturing.

While TRIC helped bring awareness to the area's many offerings, Virginia City has a rich history in the area. The city is world famous for its saloons, mine tours and Wild West atmosphere. It attracts tourists with parades, food festivals, rodeos, the International Camel Races and even the World Championship Outhouse Races.



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Pat Whitten, Storey County manager, said NNDA is not only helping the city expand its tourism base, but is also looking to bring in tourism support firms.

In addition, Comstock Mining has its primary home in Storey County where the Comstock Lode of silver ore originally spurred Nevada's economic growth in the 1800s. Nevada is a globally significant producer of metals and minerals, especially gold, silver and copper. Comstock Mining has begun mining the area again. In fact, the site has grown so much it has expanded into Lyon County as well. The resurgence in gold mining is a boon to the area's economic development efforts.

Storey County is also becoming well-known as a prime location for technology-related businesses to serve both local and global markets. Tesla chose TRIC as the site of its "gigafactory", an approximately 5.8 million square foot facility expected to be completed by 2020. The factory will produce batteries for Tesla's electric vehicles and currently occupies almost 2 million square feet of space. Additionally, Switch is constructing a 1.2 million square foot SUPERNAP data center at TRIC with plans to eventually occupy 6.5 million square feet. The two companies chose Storey County as their base, in large part, because of the ease of doing business in the area.

The county has tremendous capacity for growth in the industrial sector. TRIC, for example, is 104,000 acres and is both technologically and environmentally sophisticated. The industrial park has the capacity of 80 million square feet of industrial space alone.

## Churchill County Blending Tradition and Innovation

Churchill County continues its heritage as an agricultural area, growing alfalfa and other commodity crops, and hosting the Fallon Cantaloupe Festival & Country Fair each fall. But it's looking

to the future of agriculture as well, with innovative ideas and products, such as teff, a small grain native to Ethiopia. Teff, which grows well in Fallon, is now sold in ethnic food stores and used in gluten-free restaurants.

Churchill County is also positioned to become a key participant in the growing winery and distillery industry in Northern Nevada. Frey Ranch near Fallon is home to Churchill Vineyards and Frey Ranch Distillery, both of which use locally grown materials.

Helping put the county on the map for milk products, Dairy Farmers of America, a national farmer-owned marketing cooperative for the milk industry, has built a dairy ingredients facility in Fallon. The \$90 million facility brought 54 jobs to the area and processed its first milk delivery in April 2014. In all, Churchill is home to 23 dairies.

Naval Air Station (NAS) Fallon plays a key role in the economy of Churchill County. The United States Navy's premier air-to-air and air-to-ground training facility, NAS had a total economic impact of \$517 million on Churchill, Lyon and Washoe counties in fiscal year 2015 and provided 4,586 jobs.

Churchill also has a new focus on attracting manufacturers. New Millennium chose Churchill County as the prime location of a plant that manufactures steel joists and recently expanded the facility.

### Live, Work and Play Balancing Lifestyles

"The Sierra Region is a great place to live, work and play," said NNDA's Hooper. "We want to attract young professionals from northern California and other areas to come live in the Sierra Region. They can work for

great companies here. They can own a large house on a golf course in a beautiful area for less money than they'd pay for a cramped city apartment. We're the perfect package, for both companies and workers. For companies, we offer low taxes and a nationally recognized, business-friendly environment. For workers, we offer a lower cost of living, wonderful weather and amenities, and a lifestyle that's second to none." ■

## Contact NNDA

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