

Rural computer company gets gold certification

By Ron Wilson,
Director of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development at Kansas State University.

“Go for the Gold.” That phrase sounds like the recent Winter Olympics, but in this case it refers to an innovative computer company based in rural Kansas which has achieved the prestigious and exclusive Gold certification from Microsoft.

Galen Lambert is the president and founder of Computer Solutions Inc. or CSI. Galen grew up on a farm near Smith Center. He graduated from K-State with a degree in accounting and had a job offer in downtown Chicago, but ended up in Topeka and Lincoln, Neb. selling adding machines.

His corporate career took him to Detroit, Philadelphia, and Min-

neapolis, but when he and his wife, Judy wanted to start a family, they moved back to Smith Center.

One day in 1982, the county extension agent in a neighboring county told him that there was a guy starting a computer company and he thought Galen could help him run it. Galen did that a few years and then went out on his own. In 1987, Galen founded Computer Solutions Inc., known as CSI for short.

I told Galen that he had CSI before CSI was cool - or at least before it became the name of a popular television show. I'll bet they could sell some cool t-shirts with the company name on them.

Today, Galen has built CSI into a business which generates \$3 million in annual revenue and employs 20 people covering Kansas and surrounding states. The company

headquarters is in Galen's hometown, the rural community of Smith Center, population 1,887 people. That's rural - but there's more.

CSI has additional offices in Belloit, Concordia, and McPherson. CSI is even working on opening another office in the town of St. Francis, a rural community of 1,471 people. Now, that's rural.

Why open an office in such a rural community? The answer, Galen said, is “people.” He explained that one of his technicians is from St. Francis and would like to move back there.

Galen describes CSI as a “value-added information technology service and sales organization for the small business community.” CSI also specializes in serving the financial, government, and education sectors.

CSI is one of the five largest Hewlett Packard resellers in Kansas.

This is an especially remarkable achievement because CSI is so far from large population centers. Galen's success has caught the attention of Hewlett Packard administrators. He has recently had visits from HP executives who came to Smith Center, Kansas from Utah, Texas, Omaha and California.

So how has CSI done it? “Personal dedication to our customers is key, and we have an excellent combined skill set of our employees,” Galen said.

He believes in customer service. He has personally driven more than 50,000 miles every year since opening the company. This dedication has paid off. CSI has assisted most of the businesses in northwest Kansas.

Benchmarking is another key for Galen's company. He is part of the Heartland Technology Group, which is a peer group of IT companies that share financial and organizational data with each other.

These companies are grouped regionally but not with their direct competitors. Key indicators are identified and then compared among these companies so they can better measure their progress.

Galen believes this high-tech “measuring stick” has been important to help the company identify needs and opportunities for strategic improvements. He was selected as the outstanding member of the Heartland Technology Group last year.

Technical excellence is another hallmark of CSI. The company's engineers and technical staff in-

clude many accreditations. From both Microsoft and SonicWALL, for example, CSI has even been Gold certified.

This is the highest level of certification available and has been achieved by fewer than a dozen companies in the state. For more information, go to www.csiks.net.

Go for the gold. No, it's not an Olympic gold medal, it's a prestigious and exclusive certification for computer companies.

We commend Galen and Judy Lambert and all the people of CSI for making a difference by serving the technology needs of his customers in such an effective way. They are helping rural Kansas meet a gold standard.

matters of record

Cases filed in the U.S. District Bankruptcy Court, 167 United States Courthouse, 401 N. Market Street, Wichita. Definitions: Chapter 7, liquidation, business or personal; Chapter 11, business reorganization; Chapter 12, farmer reorganization; Chapter 13, personal reorganization. Db: as doing business as; aka: also known as.

Goodland
Donge, Opal Van, liabilities \$107,227, assets \$71,365

Accidents
The following accidents were investigated by the Goodland Police Department.

March 11 — 1 p.m., 1900 Cherry Ave., a 1996 Chevrolet driven by Yolanda G. Ledesma was backing out of a parking space and did not see a 2005 Ford driven by Teresa Porter and hit the Ford.

March 13 — 6 a.m., 2300 S. K-27, a 1985 Ford driven by Ryan Eric Scott was driving south in the parking lot of 23rd and Enterprise

Rd. The driver failed to maintain control, began to skid, struck loose soil and overturned, rolled over landing upright after hitting a fence.

March 15 — 12:46 p.m., 100 Maple Drive., a 2007 Freightliner driven by Steven Mark McMullen was backing his semi and trailer into the parking lot behind Goodland Regional Medical Center when he misjudged his distance and hit the left front fender of a 2006 Pontiac owned by an unknown driver.

March 18 — 9 p.m., 1100 Walnut Ave., a 1994 Dodge Caravan van owned by Shannondo Weber was parked in front of 1015 Walnut at 9 p.m. on March 18. There was no damage to the van at that time. When Weber went out at 7:30 a.m. the next morning he discovered the damage.

Goodland Police
The following incidents have been reported to the Goodland Police Department:

Feb. 28 — 5:07 p.m., 1302 College Ave., arrested Matthew Loren Rivera for aggravated assault against Levi J. Taylor. Case referred to county attorney.

March 3 — 8:40 p.m., 1200 Arcade Ave., Vickie Sue Cross and a juvenile reported theft. Case referred to city attorney.

March 5 — 4:55 p.m., 2160 Commerce Rd., arrested Britton C. Williams for theft from Walmart. Case referred to city attorney.

9:31 P.M., 2160 Commerce Rd.,

arrested Veronica R. Hart for theft from Walmart. Case referred to city attorney.

March 7 — 2:16 p.m., 2160 Commerce Rd. Walmart reported theft. Case referred to county attorney.

2:58 p.m., 1319 Cherry Ave., Jennifer Ann Davis reported burglary and theft.

March 10 — 11:29 a.m., 516 Clark Ave., Todd Aaron Davis was a victim of battery. Case referred to city attorney.

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