

# Casino

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Once the full \$55 million casino is opened, it will employ about 950 people, according to plans.

At the Las Cruces career fair that Hernandez attended, former Mayor Ruben Smith told the audience that he has been supportive of the casino for the economic development and jobs it would bring to the area.

Casino consultants hired by Circle P then talked about how the pueblo has committed to investing \$1 million into workforce training and detailed career paths in culinary services, finance and operations, such as:

- A person could start in a casino kitchen washing dishes for between \$8 and \$9 an hour, become a prep cook for between \$8 and \$10 an hour, then a line cook for between \$9 and \$11 an hour, a lead line cook for between \$12 and \$15 an hour before finally advancing to kitchen manager for \$14 to \$16 an hour.

- Beverage serving jobs range from barbacks and servers making between \$7 and \$9 an hour and shift leads at between \$12 and \$15 an hour, to bartenders making \$14 to \$17 an hour or bar manager at between \$24 to \$27 an hour. With the exception of the manager, the other jobs get tips.

- In the restaurant itself, a casino hostess, bus staff or wait staff can make between \$7 and \$9 an hour, with lead wait

persons making between \$9 and \$12 an hour and the supervisor making between \$15 and \$18 an hour. Except for the supervisor, the other restaurant workers also make tips.

- For slot machine operations, slot hosts make between \$7 and \$9 an hour, plus tips, while slot cashiers make between \$9 and \$12 an hour, with tips. Cage cashiers make between \$11 and \$14 an hour without tips and the slot club administrator makes between \$10 and \$12 an hour. Other non-tip slot jobs are count team members at between \$12 and \$15 an hour, count and cage supervisors at between \$16 and \$19 an hour and the slot floor supervisors at between \$16 and \$19 an hour.

- Safety security and emergency officers can make from \$8 an hour to \$15 an hour, with the safety manager making between \$24 and \$28 an hour.

- In human resources, assistants, recruiters and trainers make between \$9 and \$16 an hour, with managers making between \$24 and \$29 an hour.

Hernandez said she liked what she heard, figuring she could work as a host, clerk of slot cashier for decent pay at hours she could work around her school schedule. She said she hopes the casino does open because "the pay is good and I need the money for school."

One thing about casinos, workers move around a lot, which means that steady work-

ers can advance quickly, said consultant Jay Marqua. He said the pueblo is committed to hiring from southern New Mexico and Anthony — both on the New Mexico and Texas sides of the stateline town.

More than 800 people turned out for the Anthony career fair, while the Las Cruces and Vado area career fairs saw about 200 people each, according to Dave Wilson, who has been hired by Circle P and the Pueblo to handle local marketing and public relations.

Companies that get government contracts do similar job fairs even if they don't have the contracts yet, said county commissioner Kent Evans, based on his experience as an administrator with NMSU's Physical Science Laboratory.

Prior to the career fairs, casino opposition organized a press conference Friday in Las Cruces. Guy Clark, executive director of the New Mexico Coalition Against Gambling, characterized the career fairs as "a cruel cynical hoax."

"But they're doing what the gambling industry does best," Clark said, "they're selling false hopes."

At the Las Cruces career fair, Smith countered Clark's statement by telling the audience that the jobs were real — should the casino be approved by the Interior Department and Gov. Bill Richardson.

Clark sarcastically predicted that a casino in Anthony would

## VISITOR IMPACT

- 568,000 Visitors Would Come From Beyond A 50 Mile Radius
- Casino-induced Tourism Is Typically Not Seasonal. Visits Remain Steady Through Out The Year And Occur On Both Week Days And Week Ends
- Visitors Stay In Area Hotels, Purchase Gasoline, Shop At Area Stores, And Buy Have A Tendency To Purchase Local Products

Source: GVA Marquette Advisors

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT

- \$540,000 In Annual Funds For Ambulance, Police, And Fire Services
- Approximately \$100,000 In Fees To The County In Lieu Of Casino Property Tax
- \$40,000 To \$60,000 Property Tax Payment For The New Hotel
- \$1Million in workforce training
- Generous And Substantial Foundation That Will Be An On Going Source Of Support For Various Community Needs Such As Education, Parks Or Other Community Support Initiatives

Source: Intergovernmental Agreement

produce some jobs — in pawn shops. But, he said, communities have found that having casinos causes more economic decline than prosperity and that personal bankruptcies and crime would increase.

Rev. Juan Acevedo of Central Familiar Cristiano, an Assembly of God church in Anthony, said the community needs to work on its problems with families before allowing something like a casino in that would make problems of drugs, crime and gangs even worse. He characterized the lure of area economic development by

the casino as a "get rich quick scheme" and the jobs as "dead-end jobs."

"We need jobs that make our community a healthy community," Acevedo said. "We need to resolve the problems we have in the community right now."

No matter what happens with the casino proposal — which is currently going through an Environmental Impact Study process — Acevedo admitted it has given attention to Anthony, which has not benefited from growth as much as surrounding communities.