



June 28, 2024

Nebraska Senator Robert Clements
P.O. Box 94604
State Capitol
Lincoln, NE 68509

Dear Chairman Clements:

In accordance with State statute (Neb. Rev. St. 81-1205), the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) herein submits its Customized Job Training (CJT) report for the 2023 program year. The attached report can also be found as part of DED's 2023 Legislative Annual Report at the official website of the Nebraska Unicameral Legislature.

The current submission includes information relevant to each active and closed CJT grant, including program expenditures, new and existing employees trained, training dates, etc. Funding under CJT has provided valuable support for Nebraska by creating jobs and fostering workforce development.

The Department appreciates the Legislature's continued support for and commitment to Nebraska's people and communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K.C. Belitz".

K.C. Belitz
Director

PART 7: THE CUSTOMIZED JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

Given the rapid pace of technological innovation, the most adaptable companies are best positioned to succeed. The Customized Job Training (CJT) Program provides funds to help businesses in Nebraska train their employees in the use of new equipment and technologies. By helping to develop a highly skilled, tech-savvy workforce, DED is keeping Nebraska on the leading edge of technological change.

CJT grants provide financial assistance for employee training initiatives that create or retain quality jobs in Nebraska. The program gives preference to projects resulting in increased investment and employment in the state. Eligible activities within the CJT program include on-the-job training, classroom instruction, educational costs such as tuition and fees, and costs of training materials.

CJT awards must be used to train full-time, permanent, in-state employees who are not involved in administrative support, management, or facility maintenance. Businesses have one to three years to complete training for employees under CJT. All CJT grant recipients must maintain their employee baseline as of the time of application for at least two years.

CJT Active Grants, 2023 Program Year

Five CJT contracts were active during the 2023 program year, representing \$5,032,000 in awards. Combined, these contracts have supported the training of 1,336 new employees and the retention of 10 additional employees. As of June 2024, expenditures for these five contracts totaled \$4,460,145. Table 7.1 displays data for each of the contracts.

Table 7.1 Customized Job Training Active Contracts, 2023 Program Year

Business Name	Award	Expenditures to Date	New Employees Trained	Existing Employees Trained	Training Period Start Date	Training Period End Date
Malco Products	\$20,000.00	\$19,999.84	10	0	1/29/2019	1/29/2022
Lincoln Premium Poultry	\$4,400,000.00	\$4,349,888.22	800	0	6/1/2019	6/1/2022
Staska Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	\$32,000.00	\$10,940.23	16	0	6/1/2020	6/1/2023
Graepel North America, Inc.	\$80,000.00	\$79,317.00	10	10	5/1/2022	4/30/2024
Amazon	\$500,000.00	\$ 0	500	0	1/11/2023	2/11/2025
Total	\$5,032,000.00	\$4,460,145.29	1,336	10		

CJT Closed Grants, 2023 Program Year

As shown in Table 7.2, one CJT contract was closed during the 2023 program year. This award, to PetSource by Scoular, resulted in 60 new employees being trained from 2020 through 2022.

Table 7.2 Customized Job Training Closed Contract, 2023 Program Year

Business Name	Award	Expenditures to Date	New Employees Trained	Existing Employees Trained	Training Period Start Date	Training Period End Date
Petsource by Scoular	\$120,000.00	\$96,000.00	60	0	6/29/2020	6/28/2021
Total	\$120,000.00	\$96,000.00	60	0		

DED Strengthens Workforce, Supports Growth of German Manufacturer in Metro Omaha

Before moving from Germany to Nebraska in 2006 to establish Graepel North America, Mark Zumdohme wouldn't have been able to find the state on a map. Multiple business expansions later, he earned recognition as Nebraska's "Diplomat of the Year" for helping other companies chart their course to the state. In August 2023, Governor Jim Pillen honored Mark—now CEO of Graepel North America—with the award.

DED's consistency in exceeding Graepel's expectations of customer service initially attracted the company to Nebraska. The agency has continued to offer strong support as the company has expanded in metro Omaha. This has included helping Graepel find a shovel-ready site for its existing facility, providing easy-to-access incentives to support construction, and awarding funds to strengthen the company's workforce through the Customized Job Training Program.

"We've been very blessed to have ongoing support from the State of Nebraska throughout our journey," Mark said. "DED helped us along the way every time we grew or needed to make a connection with suppliers, business partners, or attorneys. I have always been able to get help—DED has been a great resource."

From an initial workforce of one, Graepel has grown to a team of 70. "The quality of the people we have is very, very good," Mark said. "They have a lot of loyalty. They're hard-working people. They have an extremely good work ethic, which has helped us grow."



Mark Zumdohme (center) and the Graepel team host Nebraska Governor Jim Pillen (third from right) on a visit to their manufacturing facility. (photo courtesy of Mark Zumdohme)