



## City's high tech boom paying off for local workers

*New survey shows new companies paying above average wages*

**BY SHARI ST. CLAIR**

**SAN ANTONIO** - San Antonio's economy is the bellweather for cities across the country in these tough economic times and new information shows the city is not only gaining jobs, but gaining higher paying jobs.

Mario Hernandez, president of the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation, watches the economic development of major cities across the country as he compares them to San Antonio.

"There are very few pockets that have had new job increases," Hernandez said. "San Antonio and Texas are one of those rare areas that can point to that kind of job growth."

The San Antonio Economic Development Foundation is tasked with promoting the city as a great place to do business. He explains why he feels the city is booming, while others are not. "That combination of a diversified economy, good business climate, friendly government, even to the extent that we will participate in financial incentives when needed, that combination is hard to find."

New figures compiled by the economic foundation over the last twelve months show 4,700 jobs were announced and of those, almost 2,000 of those are termed "high wage jobs."

Those are jobs that are over what the SAEDF calls "the Bexar County Average Weekly Wage". This is the first year that the SAEDF has compiled such a survey.

In terms of salary, Hernandez said its "jobs that begin at over \$41,000 a year plus benefits." He adds it's a very strong trend for San Antonio.

The city's new higher paying jobs are reflective of the type of high tech companies relocating here, and those companies are what drew the HB Agency, an integrated marketing company based in Boston, to open a branch here instead of the Silicon Valley as originally planned.

HB Agency's Andrea Dunbeck said "as our core expertise really honed in more on medical technology, clean technology, and grew from our original core focus on high tech, this area really made a lot more sense."

HB Agency's clients are worldwide, and this South Texas town has gone against their stereotype of what San Antonio should be like. "Folks are surprised about the level of education in the city," said Dunbeck. "They're not

quite aware of how large an influence UTSA has been in the area, and beyond that the many local private universities in the area."

That's just one of the messages the city's economic leaders want to make sure other businesses hear. "Corporate America needs to know that we are an economic success," said Hernandez. "That this is a very good place to do business."

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